

Community Issues Report

FIRST QUARTER 2012

Meredith Corporation
WHNS FOX Carolina

04/02/12

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COMMUNITY ISSUES

01/1/12 – 03/31/12

Consumer, Health & Safety

An interest in knowing about events that impact our daily lives. A need for information about how to be wise shoppers of goods and services and how to live healthy and safe lives.

Crime

A need to know about crime and law enforcement activities and a concern for personal safety.

Education

A concern about the money and skills needed to improve schools and an interest in improving student's quality of education.

Environment

A concern for how the environment is affected by human activity.

Government

An interest in how government affects our personal lives

Jobs/Economy/Growth

An interest in the local and national economic outlook and the impact growth has on our communities

Quality of Life

An interest in things that improve one's satisfaction with life

The following pages list representative samples of program segments from The Ten O'clock Newscast, The News at 6:30 Newscast and The Morning Newscast during this quarter that respond to our ascertained issues. Each segment was 20 seconds to 3 minutes in length (except as otherwise reported).

The following pages also identify issue-responsive episodes of programs, which are listed under the appropriate issue as well as public service announcements.

WHNS also broadcasts news and weather cut-ins as needed to inform local community of breaking news and emergencies.

Attachments



Consumer, Health & Safety

**PROGRAMS ADDRESSING PROBLEM/NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **CONSUMER, HEALTH & SAFETY**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
Saturdays (airs weekly)	6:30am	TODAY'S HOMEOWNER

Description: A half-hour weekly television show that features information on how to maintain and improve your home, both inside and out. The approach to home improvement helps everyone from the experienced do-it-yourselfer to the first time homeowner. Projects are taken from start to finish in each weekly episode. (30:00)

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

American Heart Association
March of Dimes
Foundation For A Better Life
Mental Health Association of Greenville County
CPR
American Dental Association
Asthma Treatment
Lead Poisoning Prevention

January 10, 2012

Children who have heart surgery at high-volume hospitals may fare better than those who are treated in hospitals that perform fewer pediatric cardiac surgeries per year, but this is not due to volume alone. New research suggests that the busier centers are more able to spot and handle complications should they occur after heart surgery. Of more than 35,000 children who had heart surgery at 68 hospitals, nearly 4 percent of children died in the hospital, and almost 41 percent experienced at least one complication after their surgery, a new study found. Centers that performed more than 350 surgeries a year were considered "high volume," while those that performed fewer than 150 heart surgeries in children each year were "low volume." The complication rate was similar across all centers. That said, the risk for dying after a major complication was higher at hospitals that performed fewer than 150 pediatric heart surgeries a year, when compared to those centers where more than 350 heart surgeries were performed a year, the study showed. The new findings appear online Jan. 9 and in the February 2012 print issue of *Pediatrics*. "Higher mortality observed at lower-volume centers appears to be relate to a higher rate of death in those who suffer a postoperative complication, rather than a higher rate of complications alone," said study author Dr. Sara Pasquali, director of pediatric cardiovascular outcomes at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C. "This suggests that initiatives aimed at improving patients outcomes may need to focus not only on reducing complications themselves, but on better recognition and management of complications once they occur." Parents of a child in need of heart surgery may feel both scared and overwhelmed by the entire prospect and process. "Several studies have now found that higher volume hospitals tend to have better outcomes, particularly for more complex cases," Pasquali said. "Volume is not the only important factor and that there are smaller hospitals with outcomes comparable to those at larger centers. Overall, a hospital's past track record with similar types of cases may be the best information to consider rather than relying upon the volume of the center alone." Dr. Rubin Cooper, chief of pediatric cardiology at Cohen Children's Medical Center in New Hyde Park, N.Y., said high-volume centers are not always an option based on where a patient lives and the urgency of the surgery. "There aren't that many centers that do so much," Cohen said. "High-volume centers may have more tools and more surveillance, but low-volume centers all have board-certified

people who are trained to know what they can and can't do, and they certainly would refer a case that they could not handle. Some children do need highly specialized centers if they have a rare condition." However, he added, "I would say as many as 80 percent of pediatric heart patients can be treated by nearly all of the programs."

January 27, 2012

The Italian Association of Tour Operators announced Friday that passengers of the grounded Italian cruise ship, Costa Concordia, are likely to receive compensation of \$14,460 each. The Associated Press reports that this compensation seeks to reimburse passengers for lost luggage and psychological trauma after the ship ran aground and capsized. Passengers also will be reimbursed the full cost of their cruise, their travel expenses and any medical expenses sustained after the accident. The ship crashed into a reef near the Italian island of Giglio on Jan. 13. It now remains half-submerged as salvagers muse over the best way to safely remove it and the half-million gallons of fuel. The association said the decision was reached during a meeting between Costa Cruises and consumer groups. The parent company of Costa Cruises is Miami-based Carnival Corp. Passengers can pursue legal action on their own if they aren't satisfied with the deal. A total of 16 bodies have been recovered from the ship, while another 16 remain unaccounted for. Roughly 4,200 people were aboard the cruise liner at the time of the collision. The cruise ship captain, Francesco Schettino, remains under house arrest and could face charges of manslaughter, shipwreck and abandoning ship.

January 27, 2012

At shooting range, target practice involves skill and precision. And in order to get a concealed weapons permit to carry a gun legally, there's an eight-hour course and instruction on how to shoot one. But investigators said that didn't happen at one class. "The people came in and they only stayed about 35 minutes," Rep. Eddie Tallon with District 33 said. He represents areas of Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties. He said he got a tip that an instructor would give answers, but wouldn't test students on how to legally handle a gun. "And that includes firing a weapon and showing proficiency in a weapon," he said. So, he called agents with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division. "We've got to stop this, this is not right for citizens," he said. Investigators said an undercover agent signed up for a class back in January at D's Auto Sales in Gaffney with 15 other students. The owner of the shop, Derrick Wilson, said he didn't do anything wrong. "Far as I know, he's straight," Wilson said. But SLED agents said the instructor, Richard Wykel, wasn't being straight-up at all and they charged him with perjury. "I mean he just asked me if he could use my place and I said sure. I mean it's on Sundays and I'm not open on Sundays," he said. Wilson said he's just a car dealer and was doing Wykel a favor. "I just don't like the bad image of my lot on the news," he said. SLED agents booked Wykel and said those students who took the class, should come forward. Wykel faced a judge during a bond hearing at the Cherokee County Law Enforcement Center Thursday night and later posted a \$5,000 bond. Investigators said he used to work with the South Carolina Department of Corrections and started teaching concealed weapons permit classes back in 1996. Investigators said those 15 students in the class won't get permits unless they become re-certified and they won't be charged.

January 31, 2012

New cameras installed to prevent crime in Spartanburg When a crime takes place it can happen within seconds, and that's why police may need an extra set of eyes on the street. That is why Spartanburg is adding additional cameras in several locations throughout town to assist local law enforcement. "I live downtown and my car has been broken into a couple of times in the last year," Jenni Lister, a Spartanburg resident, said. Lister often walks where she needs to go in the downtown area. So the idea of new cameras recording her every step, doesn't bother her too much. "It would be really nice to feel that security," she said. Just a little more than a week ago, police hit the streets near downtown Spartanburg during a chase. They arrested the suspect, but said new crime fighting tools are always needed. "They're on all the time. The date and time are stamped on the video as it's being recorded," Will Rothschild, Communications Manager with the city of Spartanburg, said. He said the city bought 10 cameras. One is posted at the corner of Dunbar and North Liberty. "They not only show a

wider angle, but they show a lot more detail. The video comes straight into the city's server via WiFi network downtown," he said. But some don't necessarily think cameras should watch their every move. "I kind of have mixed emotions about it," Cameron Gregory said. He hangs-out in the city, too, and believes in a way it's an invasion of privacy. But he said he understands for the most part why cameras are needed. "Because if there's any question about what's going on or about what happened someone gets mugged or robbed, you got it on camera," he said. As Jenni Lister continued to walk near Spring Street she said installing the new cameras is a big step in the right direction. "If it's my safety, I would rather somebody be watching out for me," she said. There are some older cameras still in place throughout the city as well. City administrators bought the new cameras for \$34,000 with a federal grant. All 10 cameras are expected to be up and running by the end of the week.

February 7, 2012

Today is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Tuesday, organizers are encouraging African-Americans to get educated, get tested, get involved and get treated. African-Americans represent approximately 14 percent of the U.S. population but they account for 44 percent of the nation's new HIV infections according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. AID Upstate offers free testing during the week at its facility on South Calhoun Street in Greenville. "HIV tests are really easy, just a finger stick and 10 minutes later they have the results for you," said Ra'Shawn Barlow-Flournoy with AID Upstate. "Or we can do a mouth swab."

February 9, 2012

A sewer main break shut down a Greenville County road just before rush hour Wednesday afternoon. The Greenville County Sheriff's Office said a break happened near the intersection of West Georgia Road and Carruth Street. Deputies said repair crews have shut down all but one lane of traffic on West Georgia Road between Fork Shoals Road and Sullivan Road. Crews told FOX Carolina just before 9 p.m. they found the pipe that was leaking. They are working to replace the pipe. Crews said the leak didn't cause any damage to the environment. Drivers are asked to avoid the area until the repairs are complete. On Thursday morning, crews at the scene said the road would be shut down until the afternoon, depending on what the Department of Transportation engineer said.

February 9, 2012

For some of us, our New Year's resolution was broken the first week of January. But there's one group that's still plugging away because their goal is lifetime fitness. Selecting a group fitness class can be difficult and gyms like Greenville's SportsClub can be intimidating. But group fitness director, Libby Stewart wants everyone to feel comfortable. She teaches a basic challenge class and says the members have come up with a nickname for themselves, "Fabulous forever! They are fabulous forever and that's what their goal is individually." Stewart created the class to appeal to a wide range of people. "I have rheumatoid arthritis and I really need to keep moving so this class has been wonderful for me," said dedicated class member Trudy Pimentel. "To be honest, when I got here I worried it wasn't going to challenge me as much but instantly the instructor told me, 'Don't worry, I'm going to work you hard,' and she has," said 19-year-old class member Charlsie Harris. Harris may have a few extra steps under her step aerobics box and she may have to run a few extra laps but she, and everybody else, will be pushed to their limit. "I try to challenge the 20-year-old as well as the 85-year-old and that can be a challenge for me but it's my job to make them all successful," said Stewart. The ladies don't keep coming back to class just for the weight lifting, the stair stepping and the ab work. They come for a unique camaraderie. "When I first joined, the gals were gathering around the table while the other class was finishing up and they asked me to join them right off the bat," said Pimentel. "The first day I came, I felt like I was a part of the group that very first day." "This is special because all the women in the class are so fun," Sue Horvath agreed. "It's a very dynamic class!" When their hour-long workout is over they walk away knowing they've each become a little stronger and there's a message Libby hopes everyone gets about basic challenge. "If you're afraid to come work out, come try our class," said Stewart. "Come to the club and try the class. I know it can be intimidating and my job is to make it not intimidating." Because it's never too early or too late to take those positive steps. The basic challenge class currently meets at the Greenville SportsClub on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. There are men in the class, but they were too shy to work out when our cameras were there.

February 17, 2012

Greenville County Schools officials said they will close Fountain Inn Elementary School on Friday after a second bat was found in a classroom Thursday. Department of Health and Environmental Control spokesman Adam Myrick said the school has had a problem with bats for about three weeks and they have been working with a bat-removal company. On Wednesday, a bat got into the classroom area where students and a teacher were present and was captured by school staff, according to Myrick. He said the bat tested negative for rabies. On Thursday, Greenville County Schools spokesman Oby Lyles said school was dismissing early when another bat was found in the music room. He said the animal was turned over to DHEC for testing. Lyles said as a precautionary measure, school was dismissed early. He said any students at the school after 1 p.m. would be transported to Hillcrest High School, where they would be supervised by staff until they were picked up. Lyles said that the school would be closed on Friday, while school leaders meet with DHEC officials, the animal removal company and a bat expert from Clemson University. Lyles said school officials will decide Sunday if classes will resume on Tuesday. Greenville County students have Monday off for Presidents' Day. Greenville County Schools Communications Coordinator Susan Clarke said five to six bats had been seen in the past three weeks inside the gym and school officials closed the gym while maintenance crews were working to seal off the areas where bats could have entered. Last week, the district brought in a professional animal removal service to remove the bats from the gym and while working, they saw more than 300 bats evacuate the gym. Clarke said the bat found in the fourth-grade classroom Wednesday was in the wing closest to the gym, and they did not believe it had been in the room overnight. Myrick said there was no reason to suspect a bite or any other exposure, but DHEC was at the school to prevent any exposure of humans to rabies. He said they were monitoring the situation and were pleased with the school's progress in the cleanup. The bats had been concentrated in the gym and the area had not been used, according to Myrick. He said if the bat tests positive for rabies, DHEC will monitor the situation more closely. Clarke said they removed students from adjacent rooms to where the bat was found on Wednesday. She said district maintenance personnel, along with an animal removal contractor, are checking all areas of the building, starting with the areas immediately adjacent to the affected classroom. Greenville County Schools, after consulting with DHEC officials, decided to vacate the six classrooms in the quadrant of the building where the bat was discovered as a precautionary measure. Officials said work will continue inside the school after students have left and there is no evidence that there are other bats in the school. Clarke said a phone message was sent to parents today. According to DHEC, bat bites are not rare and several cases are reported each year.

February 20, 2012

Step into Kellie Farmer's home in Lavonia, and you're bound to hear an unsettling sound coming from inside the walls in her living room. "It sounded like a lot," she says. "You could put your ear up to the wall and you could hear them all over the walls" And it's not a rat she's talking about. She says, "about three weeks ago, we heard a little squeaking and scratching, and thought it was a mouse. We went up to the attic to take a look, and it was bats." She knows what's going on at Fountain Inn Elementary, because she's going through it herself. Like the school, her home has a bat problem. And like the school, the bats are inside the walls of her home.

And Keith Murphy with A1 Wildlife Control in Seneca says Farmer isn't his only client. In fact, he says this is his third bat call this week. "This time of the year," Murphy says, "they are hard to get out because the cold nights we have." Bat calls are highly unusual for this time of year, because the bats should be further south. But add in the mild winter, and a small hole in a home, and you've got yourself a problem. "A bat can hide in a small area and you can't really find them all at a time. You just got to put a one-way door up and let them come out, and leave it up," Murphy says. Murphy says he feels for the people cleaning Fountain Inn right now. He knows the work going into cleaning just a house can be big. For the Farmer home to be completely clean, he may have to take out the sheet rock in the home. And even then, that won't guarantee they'll all be gone. But for now, Murphy will be setting up one way exits for the bats, and once they're all gone, he'll fill the holes, though Farmer knows it won't be the end of the bat infestation. "Whenever they leave our house, they'll just go to a neighbor's or on down the road until they find another place. They don't go far. They'll try to find something else," Farmer says. And where there's one bat, there's usually more. Murphy says if you live near a school or another home that has a bat problem, you might have one, too. He says you need to check for any holes on or near the roof of your home, and if you notice any strange sounds inside your walls or any strange smells, you need to get it checked. We're told pest control and sanitation services can run you anywhere from around \$500 to more than \$2,000 just for a home, depending on which service you choose.

March 8, 2012

A train derailed Thursday morning while traveling through Abbeville, according to officials. Abbeville Fire Department's Fire Chief Mason Speer said the derailment happened within the city limits on the south side of town about 4:30 a.m. and crews were evacuating within about a half mile from the crash, which happened near Haigler and Redd streets. Speer said the evacuation area included an industrial area and Long Breach as well. Emergency officials said the only chemical leak reported was non-hazardous. Emergency crews set up a command center and there is a shelter set up at the Abbeville Civic Center. The Red Cross is on its way to assist. Speer said his first crew on the scene backed out when their eyes started burning. Speer said hazardous material crews from Greenwood Fire Department and in Anderson are at the scene of the derailment trying to determine what the train was carrying and what precautions needed to be taken. South Carolina Emergency Management Division spokesman Derrec Becker said residents of about 10 homes were evacuated. He said while some rail cars derailed, there have been no chemicals released and the evacuations are a precaution. Becker said there was a leak of a non-hazardous, thick liquid called propanediol, which is used in plastics and wood paint-type materials. Becker said they were asking people to stay inside their homes as a precaution. He said two first responders were taken to hospital. The Department of Health and Environmental Control along with the National Transportation Safety Board were also at the scene. FOX Carolina spoke with Abbeville Assistant City Manager David McCuen who said one tanker was leaking, but airborne tests showed the air was safe and nothing hazardous was in the air. McCuen said crews were working to contain the leak. CSX train derails, clean-up time unknown CSX railroad said one of its trains derailed in Abbeville, and one of the overturned cars was carrying methanol. CSX spokesman Gary Sease said there is no indication of any leak from the car and no injuries have been reported. He said 28 cars on the 93-car train derailed. The train was headed from Atlanta to Hamlet, NC. Sease said they do not know yet what caused the derailment, but they are investigating the crash. He said their first concern were the people affected by the crash and apologized to anyone inconvenienced by the derailment and evacuations. There was only one car carrying a hazardous material, according to Sease. He said the tanker was carrying methanol and they have checked it, and the car looks to be structurally sound and was not leaking. The train was carrying a variety of manufactured materials and empty cars, according to Sease. CSX will have to reroute other trains as the tracks through Abbeville are a part of an important train route, according to Sease. He said they will reroute trains to keep shipments on schedule. Sease they do not know how long it will take to clean up the derailment and remove the cars from the tracks, but they were working to get the area cleared as safe and effectively as possible. An investigation into the cause of the crash would start with three main areas, according to Sease. He said they would look at the rails, the train cars and locomotive, and then the train recorder to assess what might have gone wrong. Schools unaffected while nearby residents evacuated Abbeville County Schools Assistant Superintendent Betty Jo Hall said schools will start at normal times. She said they were monitoring the situation and had done run throughs before deciding that schools would start on time. FOX Carolina spoke with some of the evacuees at the shelter who said they were frustrated because they weren't notified immediately by officials. Several evacuees said they found out by word of mouth. One man said he lives near the tracks and heard the crash about 4:30 a.m., but he said he did not hear sirens so he went back to sleep. He said he took his children to work and while driving back home, he was stopped at the detour and not allowed to return home. Another woman said she was called by a friend about the derailment and she called 911, who told her to go to the civic center. McCuen said people were told to stay inside their homes because it was a voluntary evacuation, but if they left they would be sent to the shelter and not allowed to return home until the "shelter in place" evacuation was lifted. Evacuees at the shelter were told they are allowed to leave the shelter but not allowed to return home. They were told they would be fed lunch around noon. As of 11 a.m., the blocked off area was limited to the area near Redd, Shop Hill and McBride streets and the railroad tracks. Officials said they were letting evacuees home that did not live in the still blocked off area. McCuen thanked the news media for helping in spread the word about the evacuations and said officials used ATVs to notify residents of the evacuations, going door-to-door. Those still displaced as a part of the evacuation would be put up in hotels by the Red Cross or CSX, according to McCuen.

March 8, 2012

Two teens thought to be missing in Jones Gap State Park were located safe and sound early Wednesday. Authorities had been looking for the pair for hours after the men, 18 and 19, were overdue to return from a hike. According to the River Falls Fire Department the two young men went hiking on Tuesday, but decided to camp without getting the proper permit. The park staff noticed a car without a camper sticker on it and thought the two were lost in the woods. Emergency crews set up a command post at the ranger station for the park near the intersection of Jones Gap and State Park roads. The two were located after midnight.

March 13, 2012

When you take a medication, there's a hope it'll cure sickness. A new study finds a commonly prescribed anxiety pill may have an unusual side effect - reducing racial bias. Propranolol is a drug used to reduce anxiety that comes from subconscious fears. Researchers at the University of Oxford in England said they've found that those subconscious fears can be linked to racial bias. In their study, 18 people were given the drug and 18 were given placebos. They were given the Implicit Aptitude Test, which gauges subconscious prejudice, and the 18 who were given the drug showed they had less subconscious racial bias. The researchers stressed that the drug didn't change people's outward racial bias - just in their subconscious. More than claiming that the drug "cures racism," the Oxford researchers said it, and others, do seem to affect people's moral attitudes in some ways. They said that is worth more research.

March 22, 2012

As US pork producers build new barns and retrofit old ones to give hogs more space, they say consumers opposed to keeping pregnant sows in tight cages can expect to pay for their clearer consciences with higher food prices. Under pressure from animal rights activists and sensing a shift in consumer sentiment, several major pork producers have agreed to phase out gestation crates and switch to more open pens. Major pork buyer McDonald's Corp. recently announced its suppliers will have to stop using them as well. "The McDonald's announcement was a tipping point in the debate about gestation stalls versus pens," said Dennis Treacy, executive vice president and chief sustainability officer for Smithfield Foods Inc., the world's largest pork producer. But the move to group pens requires building new barns and renovating old ones, more labor and more training for workers. Veterinary costs can go up because sows tend to fight and sometimes injure each other. Experts say at least some of those expenses are likely to be passed on in the price of ham, bacon, chops and sausage. "We may as a society be in the process of deciding we're more than willing to pay those costs, but people ought to know what's involved in their decisions," said Blake Hurst, president of the Missouri Farm Bureau and a former hog farmer. Smithfield had converted 30 percent of its company-owned farms by the end of December and is on track to meet its goal of switching all of them by 2017, Treacy said. A global food company with about \$13 billion in annual sales, Smithfield expects the cost of switching to open pens to reach \$300 million. Treacy said it's too early to tell how much of that would be passed along to consumers or absorbed by the company. Putting open pens into existing barns cuts production because the buildings can't hold as many sows, said Dave Warner, spokesman for the National Pork Producers Council. But building bigger barns to accommodate group pens is expensive, and smaller producers who can't afford to retrofit existing barns could be forced out of business, further reducing supplies, he said. Gestation crates typically measure about 2 feet (.6 meters) by 7 feet (2.1 meters), giving a sow that might weigh 400 to 600 pounds (181 to 272 kilograms) a space that's too narrow to turn around or even sleep on its side. While animal welfare groups insist the stalls are cruel, the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Association of Swine Veterinarians say science does not provide a clear-cut answer, and that there are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. One major reason producers switched to gestation crates is that sows in group pens tend to fight, leading to injuries and submissive sows losing out on food to more dominant animals. Feeding systems exist that reduce competition for food by letting sows eat separately, and some pen designs let them take refuge from other hogs while providing more freedom of movement. But it takes more work to monitor the animals for injuries, other health problems and whether they're getting enough food. And farm workers who enter group pens have a higher risk of injury, making better training is essential. Farm labor is expensive, and high-quality labor is even more expensive, said Brian Buhr, head of the applied economics department at the University of Minnesota. Even top quality operations making the switch experience steep learning curves, and what may seem like small cost increases per animal can add up to big expenses, he said. Some pork producers are proud they've never used gestation crates. They include Paul Willis, who founded the pork operations of Niman Ranch Inc., which supplies restaurants and supermarkets with humanely raised pork. One major customer is Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc., which drew national attention with an animated commercial about its commitment to humane farming that aired during the Feb. 12 Grammy Awards and featured singer Willie Nelson. To be sure, Niman products usually cost more than mass-produced pork. A recent check at one Minneapolis-area supermarket found Niman pork chops and ham selling for \$9.99 per pound (.45 kilograms), compared with \$5.89 for regular pork chops and \$6.29 for Hormel ham. But Willis said customers are willing to pay premium prices for the pork he and more than 500 other farmers raise according to Niman's standards. "We think our system may be the best and most efficient in the long run for the animals, for the people, for the farmers and the environment," he said. "... Sometimes there's more to farming than just how much money you make."

March 22, 2012

The new director of the Department of Health and Environmental Control is being criticized for adding four executives. *The State* newspaper reported that DHEC director Catherine Templeton says the new positions will make the agency more efficient. The new jobs pay between \$93,000 and \$119,000 annually. Don Weaver of the South Carolina Association of Taxpayer says money should be put into programs and not administration. John Crangle with the citizens group Common Cause and Sumter Sen. Phil Leventis also are questioning whether the new positions are needed. Templeton was approved as DHEC director last month. She says the new employees will provide valuable support. She also says the new employees will give a fresh look at agency operations. DHEC employment has fallen from 5,000 to 3,600 in three years.

March 22, 2012

Families canceling vacations. Fishermen watching their profits burn up along with their boats' gasoline. Drivers buying only a few gallons of gas at a time because they can't afford to fill the tank. From all corners of the country, Americans are irritated these days by record-high fuel prices that have soared above \$4 a gallon in some states and could top \$5 by summer. And the cost is becoming a political issue just as the presidential campaign kicks into high gear. Some blame President Barack Obama. Some just cite "the government," while others believe it's the work of big, greedy oil companies. No matter who is responsible, almost everyone seems to want the government to do something, even if people aren't sure what, exactly, it should or can do. A Gallup poll this month found 85 percent of U.S. adults believe the president and Congress "should take immediate actions to try to control the rising price of gas." An Associated Press-GfK poll last month showed 71 percent believe gas prices are a "very" or "extremely" important matter. Chris Kaufman, who spends \$120 a week on gas to travel the 60 miles between his two jobs, at the University of South Dakota in Sioux Falls and at a hotel in Vermillion, S.D., blames the price spike on threats from Iran to cut off oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. "I think the candidates running for president need to take a good hard look at that and determine what their foreign policy is going to be for countries that threaten to do that," he said. "It's going to affect every single citizen in the United States." Still, he believes the president has little control over gas prices, adding that it is commodities traders who really dictate prices. Trucker Cory Nissen of Ruther Glen, Va., agrees. "The president is nothing but a fall guy," Nissen said as he took a break from his rig at a stop in Wilton, N.Y., earlier this week. Nissen, who is paid by the mile, said he has seen his paychecks shrink because his employer has cut back delivery runs in reaction to the rising cost of fuel. "It needs to change and change quick," he said. "I got bills I got to pay, and half the time I can't pay them." On the presidential campaign trail, Mitt Romney called on Obama last weekend to fire his energy secretary, interior secretary and Environmental Protection Agency administrator, dubbing them "the gas-hike trio." Fellow Republican Newt Gingrich promised to roll the price of gas back to \$2.50 a gallon if he is elected. Obama mocked Gingrich's promise, saying, "They start acting like they've got a magic wand and will give you cheap gas forever if you elect us." Amy Lis of Buffalo, N.Y., and her boyfriend canceled their vacation to Florida this spring in favor of a three-hour drive to Cleveland for an overnight stay and a visit to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Even that trip will cost more than \$100 in gas. "It's more than our hotel," she said as she filled up her boyfriend's Ford Ranger pickup. In truth, there is not a lot the president and Congress can do in the short term to push down gasoline prices. They are tied to oil prices, which have climbed in recent months, pushed by increased consumption from developing nations in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East and by concerns about supply disruptions in Iran and elsewhere. Mike Siroub, who has operated a Union Oil station in the Los Angeles suburb of Arcadia for 25 years, said customers who used to fill up their tanks now put in just \$10 or \$20 at a time, telling him that that's all they can afford and that they are driving less or using more [fuel-efficient cars](#). He himself has joined them. "I used to have a car with a big V-8 engine," he said. "I traded it for a four-cylinder Toyota Camry." Among the things the government can do to bring relief to drivers is reduce gasoline taxes or push to get more fuel-efficient cars on the road. The first new fuel standards since 1990 are just now going into effect, and the U.S. [auto fleet](#) is more efficient than ever. People are still feeling the pain. "When I go out to change the prices, they honk their horns and yell at me," said Siroub whose station's cheapest grade of gas, regular unleaded, was selling for \$4.44 a gallon earlier this week. "The other day one person even gave me the finger." In New York City, some cab drivers say the high cost of gas is prompting them to race through the streets of Manhattan even more recklessly than usual to pick up more passengers during a shift. "When the gas is up, the money you make is going down," said Less Sylla, who paid \$4.17 a gallon earlier this week. "You see a lot of drivers, they're driving, boom-boom-boom, because the lease is too high and it's working on their minds. So that's why they go like that, and it causes a lot of accidents." Sylla, who said he will vote for Obama, blames greedy oil companies. In Anchorage, Alaska, general contractor W.M. Lewis said he has had to raise his prices to keep his half-dozen trucks running. "It affects

your bottom-line pricing," he said as he put \$90.13 worth of gas, at \$4.25 a gallon, into one of those trucks. Milton Walker Jr., whose Louisiana tour company takes vacationers on boat rides through the alligator-infested swamps, said he raised prices last year because of the increased cost of fuel and will do it again if gas hits \$5 a gallon. He blames the Federal Reserve, saying it hasn't kept inflation in check. "I don't think it matters who's president," he said. Shrimpers in Louisiana and lobstermen in Maine complain that high fuel prices are cutting into their profits. Craig Rogers, who burns through 50 gallons of gas a day tending his lobster traps along Maine's rocky coast, blames commodities traders, though he questions whether politicians are doing enough. He said politicians are too well off to really grasp what ordinary people are going through. "They can say they feel for us, they can say they understand us, but when you have that kind of money, there's no way you can truly understand what we're feeling," he said.

March 27, 2012

Aides revealed Saturday that former Vice President Dick Cheney has undergone a heart transplant, a procedure performed when a person's diseased or sick heart is failing and needs to be replaced with a donor's healthy heart. Speculation on social media and on the internet centered on whether Cheney was too old for the transplant, and whether his abundant wealth had anything to do with his receiving the "new" heart. Apparently, Cheney spent almost two years on the transplant list - 20 months to be exact. Patients in need of an organ transplant are registered in a national computer database linking all donors and transplant candidates. When a potential organ becomes available, the computer generates a list of possible recipients based on criteria like urgency of need, availability and the location of the patient, as well as factors like blood and tissue type. Donor hearts must come from someone who is still on life support. Gender, ethnicity and celebrity status are not factors in the computer matching. Recipients often carry pagers with them so hospitals can notify them if a donor heart becomes available. The road ahead for transplant recipients is not an easy one. They must take anti-rejection medication for the rest of their lives. Here's a look at heart transplantation, by the numbers. 6-12 - Average number of months a patient spends on the heart transplant list. 1967 - The year the first heart transplant was performed. 4 - Number of hours it takes to transplant a heart into a recipient. 2,332 - Number of Americans who had heart transplants in 2011. About 2,000 transplants take place in the U.S. each year. 3,158 - Current number of people waiting for a heart transplant. About 3,000 people are on the wait list for a new heart at any given time. 332 - Number of people older than 65 who had a heart transplant in 2011. 4-6 - Number of hours a donated heart can be kept outside the body. 100-110 - Average number of beats per minute by a transplanted heart. 70 - Average number of beats per minute by a normal heart. 90 - Percent of heart transplant patients who are adults. Children make up the remaining 10 percent. For more information or to become an organ donor, visit www.organdonor.gov. Sources: The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; The Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network; The United Network for Organ Sharing; The American Heart Association; WebMD; Gale Encyclopedia of Surgery: A Guide for Patients and Caregivers.

Attachments



Crime

**PROGRAMS ADDRESSING PROBLEM/NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **CRIME**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
Saturdays	8:00pm	COPS
Saturdays (airs weekly)	8:30pm	COPS
Monday – Friday	1:00pm	COPS
Monday – Friday	1:30pm	COPS

Description: COPS follows law enforcement officers as they answer calls and deal with the subjects and victims involved in the complaints and crimes. (30:00)

Saturdays (airs weekly)	9:00pm	AMERICA'S MOST WANTED (last broadcast 6/18/11)
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Description: AMERICA'S MOST WANTED is hosted by John Walsh. The show profiles fugitives and wanted criminals who are being sought by federal, state, or local authorities. The program gives viewers a phone number to call to provide information. (60:00)

Monday – Sunday	10:00 pm	FOX CAROLINA'S MOST WANTED
Monday – Friday	5:00a-9:00am	

Description: The FOX Carolina's Most Wanted airs during the Ten O'clock News on various nights Monday thru Sunday and The Morning News Monday thru Friday. Each segment profiles locally wanted criminals and gives viewers a phone number to call to provide information. Each segment is 45 seconds.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

Anti Texting While Driving
Anti Drinking and Driving

January 10, 2012

Columbia Police looking for a toddler missing since Thanksgiving have found a shovel and a bloody blanket, but investigators are unsure if they are connected to his disappearance. Search warrants show police went to 22-year-old Zinah Jennings' home earlier this month after her father told police he saw her in the backyard with a shovel about the time Amir Jennings disappeared. Investigators found a shovel at the home. Police also found what appeared to be blood stains on a blanket and clothes in the back of Zinah Jennings' car. Police Chief Randy Scott says the shovel and blanket have been sent to the State Law Enforcement Division for analysis. Scott says blood could have come from a wreck the mother was involved in on Christmas Eve.

January 10, 2012

Deputies said a man was shocked Sunday night while trying to steal copper from a historic Spartanburg mill. Spartanburg County Deputies said Kiley Pennington, 33, was with her boyfriend Charles Lawson, 38, at the textile mill at 5229 Clifton Glendale Rd. to steal copper when Lawson cut a live wire. "The man had climbed up about 30 feet up in the air to cut some copper wire out and ended up cutting into some live wire, which ended up giving him quite a shock and ended up falling 30 feet to the ground below," says Tony Ivey with the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office. Pennington then ran to a nearby home to call for help, according to deputies. EMS and deputies were notified by dispatch that a man with burns was nearby on Riverview Street, and Lawson was located and treated for electrical burns on several parts of his body. Deputies said Lawson was taken to the hospital and will be taken to the Detention Center once he is released. He was charged with possession of criminal tools, making implements capable of being used in a crime, second-degree burglary, trespassing and injury to real property. Pennington was charged with possession of criminal tools, second-degree burglary, trespassing and injury for metal less than \$2,000 and is being held on a \$10,000 bond. According to the burglary report, Pennington told the homeowner that called 911 that Lawson was climbing a rail when it exploded and he fell to the ground. When deputies arrived at the scene, they discovered an enclosed barb wire fence area with a sign that said "high voltage no trespassing" with a power station inside the fenced-in area, according to the report. The report said there were tools at the base of the power station, a hole in the fence, a small pool of blood and a pair of pliers still attached to the station. There were other tools, including bolt cutters, found at the mill. "This is a prime example of the risk that some people are willing to take, and it could be fatal when stealing copper and copper wiring like this. It's not worth the money that you would get to end up being seriously hurt... or even possibly killed," says Ivey. It was recently announced that the 124-year-old Clifton Mill No. 2 located at Clifton Glendale Road would be demolished after years of legal and financial troubles. *The Herald-Journal* of Spartanburg reported that county officials said the site could become a nature preserve with trails, campsites and river access. Foreclosure of the property was completed in 2009 after the former owner's failed attempts to start a sand-mining operation and to turn the mill into apartments or condos. The 240,000-square-foot mill and 39 acres of riverfront property was bought at public auction for \$500 and then sold to a developer from Louisiana for \$325,000. Clifton Manufacturing was founded in 1880. Clifton Mill No. 2 was built in 1888 and expanded in 1957. Operations ceased in the 1990s.

January 27, 2012

Deputies in Greenwood County said they may have made a break in a rash of break-ins. This break comes after a man returned home to find two people rummaging through his home. All of this happened Thursday night on Lebanon Church Road in Ninety Six, which led to an all-out search of the area at one point while authorities were tracking down the suspects. "My son came in, and found two guys in the house," said homeowner Michael Cole. "Confronted the two of them. One pulled a gun, hit him in the head. He fought with the other one, took it out to the road. The other one was across the street and shot at him twice, and they fled into the woods across the street." The Greenwood County Sheriff's Office said they believe this latest incident to be related to the recent rise in break-ins. Deputies said that at least two people are in custody, but their names have not yet been released. Stay with FOX Carolina and foxcarolina.com for more info in this developing story.

January 27, 2012

Deputies said they arrested five people Wednesday after receiving complaints about illegal drug activity at a Boiling Springs home. Spartanburg County deputies said they responded to 227 Silverbell Dr. off of Parris Bridge Road, where they found ingredients and equipment necessary to manufacture methamphetamine along with a firearm and stolen property. Estrella Soto and her mother drove by the residence Thursday afternoon, because they were notified that their stolen truck, missing since last November, was found during the bust. The family, who lives twenty minutes away, said they never expected to see the truck again. When deputies responded to the residence, they saw two females leave in a minivan, which had a tag on it that was not registered to the vehicle. They conducted surveillance on the van then performed a traffic stop. While talking to the driver, Donna Lovenvirth, 45, investigators questioned her about the illegal drug activity at the Silverbell residence. Investigators said Lovenvirth denied knowledge of the activity, but then they told her they knew she had been buying pseudoephedrine recently, and she admitted that she bought it for her boyfriend Randy. She also told them there was meth in the master bedroom and manufacturing components in the trash behind the house. After investigators received consent to search, they returned to the home and found plastic bottles of liquids inside a bathroom, along with fuel in a closet and a bottle of lye - all items deputies said were used to make methamphetamine. They said additional items were found inside the laundry room, trash outside, master bathroom and bedroom, bonus room, inside vehicles at the residence, a fire pit, a purse

and more. Neighbors told Fox Carolina they had seen visitors to the home at all hours of the night, and windows that were never closed. "Here I am running and walking, and it's like, why do people got their windows open when its thirty degrees outside?" said neighbor, Mike Lowe. "It's pretty disturbing! To have this with all the kids around and its right underneath your nose and you don't know." One home nearby is up for sale, because its owners do not want their kids near the drug activity. Five people were arrested in connection with the meth lab and deputies said more charges were expected in connection with the stolen property. Lovenvirth and Randall Cantrell, 31, were each charged with possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute and possession of cocaine base with intent to distribute. Kelly Caldwell, 35, Cayce Martin, 26, and Brittany Bradley, 20, were each charged with possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute.

January 31, 2012

A Spartanburg man pleaded guilty to assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature on Monday, getting a 17-year prison sentence and 5 years probation. Solicitor Barry Barnette said Jared Directo, 28, shot Bennie Skates Jr., 33, of Cowpens, at Directo's Skyline Drive home on March 25, 2011. Skates's was shot in the upper back and the bullet lodged in his neck. Prosecutors said witnesses saw Directo and Skates argue prior to the shooting, and Directo fled the scene afterwards. They said he was later arrested at a relative's Roebuck home. Barnette said after previously denying that he fired the gun, Directo later admitted he did fire it accidentally. Directo's prior criminal record included convictions for receiving stolen goods, forgery and driving without a driver's license, according to the solicitor.

January 31, 2012

Asheville police said they have identified the suspect accused of breaking into 14 local businesses by throwing rocks through front doors. Officers identified the suspect as Julian McKinnley Rector. They said they want to question Rector in connection with several downtown break-ins. Police said Rector has several outstanding warrants for his arrest and was last known to reside in Weaverville. The current list of businesses hit by the rock-throwing suspect, according to officers, was Charlotte Street Citgo, Wall Street Coffee House, Instant Karma, The Costume Shop, Wonderland, Octopus Garden, Metro Chinese, House of Fabrics, Chocolate Lounge, Laurey's Catering, White Duck Taco Shop, Green Man Brewery, Reader's Corner and Green Sage in the Asheville area. On Jan. 20, Asheville police released surveillance photos of the suspect they said was responsible for six break-ins up until that time. In the break-ins, the suspect threw a brick or rock through a front window, and then went in after the cash register, tip jar or anything that contained money, according to investigators. Anyone with information on Rector's location is asked to call Asheville police at 828-252-1110 or CrimeStoppers at 828-255-5050.

February 6, 2012

Deputies said a Chesnee man was arrested on Sunday after he assaulted multiple family members while claiming to be God and the Antichrist. According to a Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office report, deputies were called to a Scruggs Road residence about 5:30 p.m. where 22-year-old Corey Underwood's grandmother said he came home, pushed her against the wall and put a knife up to her throat while saying he was the Antichrist. Other relatives entered the room where they heard yelling and said Underwood then put the knife to another relative's throat, according to the report. The report said when Underwood's cousin walked into the room, Underwood had his grandmother backed into a corner and was yelling that he was the Alpha and Omega. When the cousin left, Underwood then began yelling that he was the "Alpha and the Antichrist" and that God had told him to kill one of his female relatives, according to deputies. Deputies said the family was able to get out of the house safely. The report said when they arrived at the scene and spoke with Underwood, he told deputies that they just had a disagreement in reference to the well-being of his child. All of the victims said they were worried about their safety and thought that he was going to kill them, according to the report. Underwood was charged with two counts of second-degree assault and battery and third-degree assault and battery. He was being held on a \$20,000 bond at the Spartanburg County Detention Center.

February 6, 2012

Deputies arrested and charged the aunt of a 15-month-old North Carolina girl that died on Jan. 10, 2011. Swain County deputies said Lady Bird Powell was charged with second-degree murder, first-degree kidnapping, extortion, possession of methamphetamines, possession of drug paraphernalia and two counts of felony child abuse in the death of Aubrey Littlejohn, of the Ela Community. Investigators said in 2011 that Powell was taking care of her niece while Aubrey's mother was in jail. Aubrey was rushed to the hospital and died, and the autopsy revealed she had bruises and broken bones when she died,

according to investigators. Powell was arrested Friday afternoon without incident by Swain County deputies and officers with the Cherokee Indian Police Department. Sheriff Curtis Cochran said this was, "One of the hardest cases that we have had to investigate, primarily because of the age of the child." "As a parent, it is hard to imagine any child being taken away at such an early age," said Cochran. "The law enforcement community is committed to the pursuit of justice and assisting those who cannot help themselves." Cochran said they wanted everyone in Swain County to know that law enforcement never stopped working on this case. According to warrants issued in 2011 following Aubrey's death, the negligence of social workers may have also contributed to the girl's death. The warrants said investigators found that DSS had at least two reports of neglect or abuse regarding Aubrey living with relatives prior to her death. The warrants also said a social worker admitted that his supervisor told him to change his initial reports, as soon as they found out that Aubrey died, so it would look like they performed procedures correctly. In May, a State Bureau of Investigation review found that Aubrey was abused and county DSS workers neglected to remove her from the home when they had an opportunity. The board heard from Jeff Olson, of the Department of Health and Human Services, who said some of the problems may have stemmed from a lack of supervision. Officials said the department needed to make major improvements. Powell was being held on a \$1 million secured bond at the county detention center and was scheduled to have her first court appearance on Monday.

February 7, 2012

Greenville County deputies said they need the public's help identifying the suspect caught on tape during an armed robbery at a local convenience store. Deputies said on Friday the suspect entered the Kangaroo store at 1501 Rutherford Road about 4:50 a.m., showed a weapon, and took money from the clerk. They said no one was injured during the incident. Surveillance photos caught the suspects on camera and deputies said anyone with information about the incident should call Crime Stoppers.

February 9, 2012

Emergency call logs show that nearly eight minutes elapsed between when a social worker called 911 to report that Josh Powell's children were in danger and when sheriff's deputies were dispatched. By the time officers were on their way, the home was exploding in a gas-fueled inferno, with Powell and his two young boys inside. The priority of the dispatch Sunday was "routine" instead of "emergency," which cost several minutes of response time, and when the deputies arrived 14 minutes later, there was nothing they could do. The Associated Press obtained the logs Wednesday night under a public records request. Recently released audio recordings of the 911 calls raised questions about how the dispatch center handled the social worker's call regarding Powell, who was a person of interest in the disappearance of his wife two years ago. The worker detailed how Powell had locked her out of his house during what was supposed to be a supervised visit with his sons, that she could smell gas, and that she feared for their lives. Minutes later, Powell torched the home, killing himself and the boys. The recordings showed that the man who took the 911 call engaged in nearly seven minutes of questioning that ended with him saying he didn't know how long it would be before deputies could arrive. "We have to respond to emergency life-threatening situations first," he said. "I see two problems: The delay in the dispatch, and they dispatch it as a routine call," Pierce County Sheriff's Detective Ed Troyer said Wednesday night. "Had our guy been going priority, and had they dispatched it in the first three minutes, we probably could have shaved 10 minutes off our response - but there's no way we get there in time. The logs show that the social worker called 911 from her cellphone at 12:08 p.m., but it took her until two minutes into the call to find the address of the house. Three minutes after that, the man who took her call transferred the information to a dispatcher, who alerted two deputies about 2 1/2 minutes later, at 12:16. But at precisely that time, calls began pouring in to report explosions at the house about 35 miles south of Seattle - apparently from the fire blowing out windows. The first deputy arrived at 12:30 to find the home engulfed in flames. Troyer said the sheriff's office was disappointed that the initial call-taker left the impression that help wasn't immediately on the way. "Are we unhappy with the etiquette and the manner? Yes," Troyer said. He said he hoped the call center will ensure the same mistakes don't happen again. Recordings of the 911 call show it took more than three minutes for the operator to understand that the social worker was there to supervise a child custody visit - a factor that contributed to the dispatch delay. The agency that runs the call center, Law Enforcement Support Agency, said it would review the handling of the case and start a disciplinary investigation if necessary. A spokeswoman, Kris Dessen, said it was too soon to say if the response took longer than it should have. Powell's wife, Susan, vanished in Utah two years ago. Josh Powell has long been a person of interest in the case but maintained at the time that he had taken his boys - then 2 and 4 - on a midnight camping trip in freezing temperatures when she disappeared from their home. On Sunday, the social worker drove 5-year-old Braden and 7-year-old Charlie from their grandparents' home to their father's house outside Puyallup. Josh Powell lost custody of the boys last fall, after his father, with whom they then lived, was

arrested in a child pornography and voyeurism investigation. When they arrived at the house for the regular visit, the boys ran inside the house, and Powell slammed the door in the social worker's face. She called her supervisor and 911, reaching the call center in Tacoma, about 10 miles away from Powell's house. She quickly laid out the situation: "Something really weird has happened. The kids went into the house and the parent - the biological parent - whose name is Josh Powell will not let me in the door. What should I do? ... "I could hear one of the kids crying, and he still wouldn't let me in." Pierce County, the second largest in the state and home to about 800,000 people, has an enhanced 911 system that is designed to give police an approximate location of a cellphone caller. It wasn't immediately clear if the call center used that feature to locate the social worker. While she was still looking for the address, she said, "But I think I need help right away." The dispatcher proceeded to question her repeatedly about who she was and her role. "Who is there to exercise the visitation?" he asked. "I am," she said. "The visit is with Josh Powell. And he's the husband of ..." "And who's supervising?" he asked. "I supervise." "So you supervise and you're doing the visit? You supervise yourself?" he asked. After getting it straight, the dispatcher told her someone would come, though he wasn't sure when. Moments later, the house erupted in flames. Josh Powell's sister, Alina Powell, called 911 about five minutes later to say she received emails from her brother explaining what to do with his property and saying he couldn't live without his sons. Alina Powell told a dispatcher she feared her brother was going to do something because of pressure he faced after his wife's disappearance. "I'm terrified to drive over there," she said, sobbing. "I'm not afraid of him. He's never hurt me. I'm afraid of seeing something I don't want to see."

February 10, 2012

Anderson County deputies said Thursday that the arrest of eight people has dismantled a burglary ring operating in the county. Deputies said they arrested 19-year-old David Morris Jr., 17-year-old Gabriel Galloway, 21-year-old Roytavus Blanding, 19-year-old Jamesha Gilliam, 19-year-old Jamelia Gilliam, 20-year-old Quinn Johnson, 19-year-old Martravious Clinkscales and 19-year-old Christopher Gray. Investigators said the eight suspects are connected to at least 14 burglaries throughout the county. They said the investigation developed after a burglary at a home on McClure Road on Dec. 16, 2011. They said gunfire was exchanged between the homeowner and the burglar. The burglaries to which the eight suspects are believed to be connected happened between July and December of last year, deputies said. Investigators said the home of Roger Ballew was the first broken into in July. Ballew said the teens first tried ringing the doorbell, and then his surveillance cameras recorded the two men moving from the front to the back of the house, and shattering his glass door with a tire iron. Ballew said his son was sleeping, but met the teens in the living room, and they ran to a get-away car. Ballew said he plans to use the surveillance video in court against the teens. Seven of the suspects were charged with burglary, and Blanding was charged with receiving stolen property. He was released from jail on bond. The other seven suspects were being held without bond.

February 10, 2012

An official with Spartanburg County Animal Control said a Spartanburg woman was arrested Thursday after she tried to throw her live dog away. Lt. Jamie Nelson with the Spartanburg County Office of Environmental Enforcement said they were called to the Freys Drive residence after a local trash compactor company found the 8-year-old black and white Shih Tzu dog inside the homeowner's trash can that was out for pickup. Nelson said the employee picked up the trash can and saw the dog inside the can under some trash. The employee went to speak with the homeowner who at first denied putting the dog inside the can but eventually admitted to it, Nelson said. "Basically, she decided she needed to get rid of the dog, and the best idea she had was to put it in the trash can," said Nelson. Animal control was notified and while they were en route to the house, Nelson said the homeowner put the dog inside a trash bag then put the bag in the trash can under other bags. The trash collector found the dog and gave it to animal control, where it was taken to the Greenville County Animal Care, Nelson said. Nelson said the homeowner, 58-year-old Nancy Smythe, turned the dog over to Spartanburg County. Smythe was arrested and charged with one count of animal torture. According to Nelson, the dog has a skin disorder, and other than the traumatic experience, it was otherwise alright. "Seventeen years...never had a case of someone putting a dog in a trash can," said Nelson. "Had cases of abandonment, had cases where a lady has burnt and hung the animal, this one is a new one." The dog will be held at Greenville County Animal Care for Spartanburg County for five days before it is turned over to the control of Greenville County. Susan Bufano with Greenville County Animal Care urged people to report abuse and take animals to the shelter before someone lets them suffer and die.

February 17, 2012

Anderson Police are looking for the person who shot and killed a teen Wednesday night, making this the first homicide investigation of the year in the city. Police were called to the intersection of Kennedy and Hampton streets at 9:13 p.m. According to an incident report, when officers arrived they found a man, identified as 19-year-old Redmond "Redd" Donald, lying on his back on the sidewalk, bleeding. Donald's father said Redd was a quiet guy, who had last attended T.L. Hanna High School in 2009, and loved to play basketball. Witnesses told FOX Carolina that about seven shots were fired before a car sped away from the scene. They said Donald then collapsed in the street. Family members say Redd appeared to have been shot further down Hampton Street, but collapsed just before reaching his grandmother's house. Anderson County Coroner Don McCown said Donald died of a gunshot wound about 9:15 p.m. The police department's gang unit was investigating the shooting, police said. Anderson police updated neighbors at a community watch meeting Thursday night, but said, they still have no suspects, and investigations into the how and why, are in early stages. Police say any bit of information anyone can give would help their investigations. Tips can be given anonymously by calling 888- CRIME-SC.

February 20, 2012

A Greenville County man was charged with two counts of attempted murder after deputies said he fired shots at them late Sunday night. Timothy Hudson, 22, was expected to face a judge for a bond hearing Tuesday morning, deputies said. Investigators said Hudson was first involved in a crash near the intersection of Hudson Road and Old Spartanburg Road in Greer about 11 p.m. and fled the scene. The other driver involved in the crash said Hudson ran a red light. Deputies said they later got a tip that Hudson was at a home on Hudson Way. When deputies got to the house about 11:30 p.m., they said Hudson confronted them with a gun and shot at them. Deputies said they fired back. No one was injured. Deputies said the Sheriff's Office of Professional Standards is investigating the shooting. They said that's protocol when a deputy fires a weapon. The State Law Enforcement Division was not called to the scene because no one was injured, deputies said. In connection with the crash, Hudson was charged with driving under the influence and leaving the scene of an accident. Hudson was denied bond by a judge Monday morning.

March 8, 2012

Hendersonville police were investigating a shooting Thursday morning where they said at least one person was shot. Witnesses said the person was shot off Woodcock Street in the Green Meadows community after midnight. One neighbor who didn't want to be identified told FOX Carolina's Will Jones that he heard multiple shots fired. "I heard my neighbors hollering," the neighbor said. "So I came outside and seen a guy laying on the ground." The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation is investigating the shooting. Stay with FOX Carolina and foxcarolina.com for the latest in this developing story.

March 8, 2012

When Billy Lee takes a walk around his Greenville County neighborhood, each step feels like a victory lap. About a month ago, he and his neighbors stood at the corner of Rayburn and Savannah streets in City View and wrote down license plate numbers. They also posted a handmade sign that read "Crack dealers, users and prostitutes not welcome." Lee said he wanted to fight back against what he called illegal activity near his home. "It's important to take a stand," Lee said. "Don't back down, because we didn't and our trouble moved away." Recently, Greenville County deputies arrested 42-year-old Sharod Murray on Worth Street - about a block away from where Lee and his group were keeping watch. He was charged with possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine and possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine within a half-mile of a school. "We have some really good deputies over here and they do good work," Lee said. As a result of his efforts, Lee and his neighbors are part of a new neighborhood crime watch program. "We walk around the neighborhood, and people stop us and talk to us, and, you know, we get a lot of support," Lee said. Lee said he believes that is how it should be - neighbors looking out for neighbors. He said he will continue his work to keep his community safe. "It's changing," Lee said, "and it's for the better."

March 13, 2012

One of America's most wanted criminals was brought back to Spartanburg County on Tuesday in connection with the killing of a Woodruff man in 2007. Spartanburg County deputies said 31-year-old Louis Lopez-Montero was booked into jail Tuesday after officials in Louisiana realized he was charged with murder in South Carolina. Lt. Tony Ivey, with the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office, said Lopez-Montero had been arrested on drug charges in Louisiana and gave the fake name Jonathan Evans, but when they ran his fingerprints, they discovered he was wanted in the Upstate. Lopez-Montero was charged with murder in connection with the Nov. 25, 2007, fatal shooting of Marko Whitmire, 29. According to investigators, Lopez-Montero walked up to Whitmire's car and shot him through the door of his vehicle after Whitmire returned to his Woodruff home on Hali Circle. In 2007, police said Lopez-Montero followed Whitmire home from an illegal liquor house shot Whitmire in his car. Authorities who arrived on the scene said Whitmire was found dead beside his Chevrolet Impala. Ranger Alvizures, 31, was also charged in connection with the shooting and was arrested in Wilmington, NC, on Dec. 4, 2007. Alvizures was found guilty of the charge of Accessory After the Fact to a Felony after a jury trial in February 2009. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison suspended to 4 years and 3 years of probation. Lopez-Montero was arraigned Tuesday and will have to go before a circuit court judge to have his bond set.

March 15, 2012

A Gaffney woman was shot to death Wednesday night entering her house, according to the Cherokee County coroner. Coroner Dennis Fowler said 44-year-old Alene Ellis was shot in the head and died shortly after she arrived at her Camellia Circle home about 10:35 p.m. Fowler said Ellis was shot as she entered through the door by someone believed to have already been inside the home. He said she died shortly after she had an "alleged incident" with her boyfriend. Gaffney police are investigating the homicide and an autopsy is scheduled for later Thursday. Police were searching for the suspect, but no arrests have been made. FOX Carolina spoke with Gaffney Police Chief Rick Turner who said they would release more information at a later time, but as of Thursday morning, there were not any other details available. Stay with FOX Carolina and foxcarolina.com for the latest in this developing story.

March 22, 2012

An Islamic extremist who boasted of killing seven people to strike back at France died after being shot in the head by police as he jumped out of his apartment after a fierce gunfight with police, authorities said. His dramatic death ended a more than 32-hour standoff with an elite police squad trying to capture him alive. The suspect, 23-year-old Mohamed Merah, was wanted in the deaths of three paratroopers, three Jewish schoolchildren and a rabbi - all killed since March 11 in what he reportedly told police was an attempt to "bring France to its knees." Prosecutor Francois Molins said Merah, a French citizen of Algerian descent who claimed links to al-Qaida, burst out of his bathroom when police entered his apartment Thursday morning, wildly firing his handgun about 30 times and jumping out an apartment window. Merah continued to fire "until he was hit by a retaliatory shot from the RAID (elite police unit), which felled him with a bullet to the head," Molins said. Merah had filmed all three killings, and claimed to have posted them online. Police have viewed the videos. The prosecutor said the gunman, in his first killing of a paratrooper March 11, is heard on the video saying "You kill my brothers; I kill you." When killing two other paratroopers four days later in the nearby town of Montauban, he cried out "Allahu Akbar," or "God is great" in Arabic. A volley of gunfire resounded Thursday throughout the neighborhood in the southwestern city of Toulouse as police stormed the apartment, and two police officers were wounded in the firefight. French President Nicolas Sarkozy said an investigation was under way to see if the suspect in a series of radical Islam-inspired killings had any accomplices. Sarkozy also said anyone who regularly visits "websites which support terrorism or call for hate or violence will be punished by the law." He promised a crackdown on anyone who goes abroad "for the purposes of indoctrination in terrorist ideology." The seven slayings are believed to be the first killings inspired by Islamic radical motives in France since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Authorities said Merah, a French citizen of Algerian descent, espoused a radical form of Islam and had been to Afghanistan and the Pakistani militant stronghold of Waziristan, where he claimed to have received training from al-Qaida.

March 26, 2012

The U.S. Justice Department could bring a hate crime charge against the shooter in the killing of black Florida teenager Trayvon Martin if there is sufficient evidence the slaying was motivated by racial bias and not simply a fight that spiraled out of control, legal experts and former prosecutors say. So far, only one such clue has surfaced publicly against 28-year-old George Zimmerman, the neighborhood watch captain who fatally shot the 17-year-old Martin on Feb. 26 in the central

Florida town of Sanford. On one of his 911 calls to police that night, Zimmerman muttered something under his breath that some listeners say sounds like a racial slur. Zimmerman's father is white, and his mother is Hispanic. "It sounds pretty obvious to me," said Donald Tibbs, a Drexel University law professor who has closely studied race, civil rights and criminal procedure. "If that was a racial epithet that preceded the attack on Trayvon Martin, we definitely have a hate crime. Others, however, say the recording is not clear enough to determine what Zimmerman actually said. And many experts say more evidence would be needed that he harbored racial prejudice against black people and went after Martin for that reason alone. There had previously been burglaries in the complex committed by young black males, possibly heightening Zimmerman's suspicions when he spotted Martin. "They are going to have to show he was specifically targeting this individual based on his race, creed, color, et cetera," said David S. Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor in Miami. "Not that he was chasing somebody down and got in a confrontation that may or may not have been based on that." Zimmerman's parents, in a letter to a local newspaper, insisted their son is not a racist, and several black residents of the neighborhood where Martin was shot have only good things to say about Zimmerman. Zimmerman has not been charged with any crime and is claiming self-defense under Florida's "Stand Your Ground" law, which eliminated a person's duty to retreat when threatened with serious bodily harm or death. He claims Martin attacked him as he was walking back to his truck, according to police. "He's not a racist," attorney Craig Sonner said about his client. "The incident that transpired is not racially motivated or a hate crime in any way." Those "Stand Your Ground" laws, in place in about two dozen states, have come under increasing scrutiny. U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., on Sunday sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder asking for a federal investigation into whether killings are going unprosecuted because the laws put too much of a burden on local authorities. Martin's parents and hundreds of supporters say Zimmerman should have been immediately arrested and charged with the youth's killing, but local police say they have little evidence to disprove his self-defense claim. A grand jury will be convened April 10 to consider whether to bring state charges, which could include second-degree murder or manslaughter. After receiving a no-confidence vote from the city commission, Police Chief Bill Lee announced last week he was temporarily stepping aside from his post. The city manager, Norton Bonaparte Jr., said officials want the case to be resolved fairly. Civil rights activist Al Sharpton, who has been appearing at rallies with Martin's parents to call for an arrest, said the Justice Department should investigate the case as a hate crime. "Any time you have a pattern of engagement based on someone's having a particular group in mind, that qualifies for hate crime inquiry," Sharpton told The Associated Press. The Justice Department's civil rights division and the FBI are conducting their own probe in the case, and a federal hate crimes charge could come out of that no matter what state authorities do. The hate crimes law carries a potential life prison sentence when a death is involved. Tibbs said one key is determining whether Martin's race alone was the reason Zimmerman decided to follow him in his vehicle. Martin, who was from Miami, was staying in the neighborhood with his father and father's fiancée and was returning from a convenience store with Skittles and a can of iced tea when the confrontation took place. He was not armed. "He was not suspicious. What makes him suspicious in the moment is the fact that he was black. If Trayvon Martin was white, would any of this have happened?" Tibbs said. If Zimmerman were a police officer or a government official, he could be prosecuted by the Justice Department for using his official authority to violate Martin's civil rights. That was the case made against Los Angeles police officers who had been acquitted in state court of beating Rodney King, which sparked huge riots. Two of the four officers were eventually convicted of federal civil rights violations. But Zimmerman was a volunteer watch captain, and even though he had a permit to carry his Kel Tek 9mm semiautomatic handgun, he didn't have any official law enforcement or government authority. Another possibility is an investigation of the Sanford Police Department itself, including questions about whether any evidence was destroyed or covered up, or whether there has been a pattern of problems involving black people. City officials insist they did an appropriate and thorough investigation, but if such violations occurred federal prosecutors could bring civil rights conspiracy charges against anyone responsible. Bonaparte did acknowledge last week that the police department has had issues with the city's African-American residents. For instance, in 2010, it took a month for investigators to arrest and charge the son of a police lieutenant who was accused of knocking out a homeless black man. The attack was captured on video. "This police department, how they've handled this case and how we are hearing of other cases, needs a thorough review by the Justice Department," Sharpton said. Ultimately, much depends on the results of the state grand jury investigation. If Zimmerman ultimately is charged in Martin's death, the Justice Department may not bring its own separate case depending on the outcome of any trial. The mere presence of federal investigators could ensure a more thorough probe, said University of Florida law professor Michael Siegel. "A lot of times when these things are getting potentially explosive, they want to step in and say, 'We're looking over the shoulder of the locals here,'" said Siegel, a former federal prosecutor. "That often helps calm the public down. It does put some pressure on the local law enforcement to take a second look and do it right."

March 27, 2012

A man convicted of murder in Florida and Georgia is accepting a life prison sentence without parole after pleading guilty in North Carolina to ambushing and killing an elderly couple hiking in a national forest. U.S. Attorney Anne Tompkins says 65-year-old Gary Michael Hilton pleaded guilty Tuesday to killing John and Irene Bryant in 2007. Prosecutors say Hilton camped out waiting for victims before he encountered the couple who were both in their 80s as they hiked in the Pisgah National Forest in Transylvania County. Hilton already is on death row in Florida and has a life prison sentence for murder in Georgia. Both of those female victims were beheaded. The bodies of the four victims were found over a span of several months starting in late 2007.

March 30, 2012

A South Carolina mother has been sentenced to 35 years in prison for killing her two young sons, then putting them in her car and staging a crash into a river. Shaquan Duley was sentenced Friday by Circuit Court Judge Edgar Dickson, who said he appreciated that Duley took responsibility but that she needed to be punished. Duley pleaded guilty earlier this month to two charges of murder in the deaths of her sons, 2-year-old Devean and 18-month-old Ja'van. Her attorney says the 30-year-old mother tried to kill herself the night of her sons' deaths and was depressed after her mother berated her parenting skills. Duley made no deal with prosecutors. She faced between 30 years and life behind bars.

Attachments



Education

**PROGRAMS ADDRESSING PROBLEM/NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **EDUCATION**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

GED

Literacy

College Access

Dropout Prevention

January 10, 2012

Repayment Changes President Obama became a friend to recent college graduates who find themselves with unsustainable student loan payments. In an executive order, Obama has moved up the date of student loan reform from 2014 to 2012. These changes come in two parts. First, the "Pay as You Earn" proposal will allow recent graduates to make payments as a percentage of their earnings. Under the current system, students are only required to pay a maximum of 15% of their discretionary income towards their student loan payments. Under the new law, students will only have to pay 10%. Also under this executive order, students will only have to make payments for 20 years instead of the current period of 25 years. Second, borrowers will be able to consolidate their loans into one monthly payment. Borrowers with student loans from multiple lending companies know how difficult it is to keep track of who owns the loan and the payment amount without setting up multiple automatic payments. Under this plan, borrowers will make one payment for all of their government sponsored loans and also receive a 0.5% rate reduction. According to The White House, 5.8 million borrowers could be positively affected by this change. (Learn how to fill out the FAFSA form so that it is easier for you to fund your education. For more, see *An Introduction To Student Loans And The FAFSA.*)

Graduate Students Lose Subsidy Not all of these changes are a benefit to students. Starting July 1, graduate and professional students will lose the ability to receive a Stafford loan and not accumulate interest while in school. These unsubsidized Stafford loans are being eliminated in order to shore up the Pell Grant program, which is currently more than \$18 billion in debt. Proponents of this bill argue that many graduate students are already in the workforce and able to handle the interest payments that could amount to as much as \$600 per year of payments while in school.

Loss of Origination Fee Rebate Under 2011 law, students pay a 1% origination fee on all Stafford loans and a 4% fee on PLUS loans. Once the loan is dispersed, 0.5% of the fee for Stafford loans and 1.5% of PLUS loans is rebated. Under changes enacted by the Budget Control Act of 2011, the rebate will be eliminated starting July 1.

Electronic Interest Rate Reduction For students who set up an automatic withdraw of their student loan payments, the Federal Government currently offers a 0.25% interest rate reduction. Presumably, the idea behind this is that the costs associated with delinquent borrowers is greatly reduced with automatic payments. The same legislation that eliminated the last two perks also eliminates this program.

Will It Work? Between the elimination of the Stafford loan subsidy, the loan origination rebate and the 0.25% interest rate reduction elimination, the Federal Government expects to save an estimated \$21.5 billion. Congress argues that budget cuts are essential to shore up the nation's balance sheet and all Americans will have to make sacrifices. The Obama administration claims that the cuts laid out in his recent executive order will cost the taxpayers nothing while opponents of the plan say that this opens the door for further abuse of the system.

The Bottom Line Looking at the five changes above, students should be more happy about the reduction in payment than they are angry about the elimination of the relatively small perks as a result of the Budget Control Act of 2011.

January 27, 2012

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley spoke to some Simpsonville students about her experience with bullying. Last year, Haley talked about being bullied while she was in school. Thursday, Haley told students at Hillcrest Middle School the key to stopping bullies is to get more students and teachers to talk about the issue. During her visit, Haley spoke with two students who have written a book about bullying. Haley also made stops at the CU-ICAR campus and the Greer Chamber of Commerce.

February 7, 2012

A student in Transylvania County disappeared for more than three hours Tuesday afternoon. Officials said that about 11:15 a.m. the 12-year-old boy darted out of the doors of T.C. Henderson Elementary School and into some nearby woods. Transylvania County Sheriff David Mahoney said after a brief search by school personnel, the child could not be found, so his department was contacted to help with the search. Mahoney said a search was conducted on the ground and from the air. He said the child was found safe about 2:30 p.m. Transylvania County Schools Superintendent Jeff McDaris said the boy and his family were meeting with the school's principal Tuesday afternoon. He said officials are trying to determine if there was anything that could have been done differently from the school's side. It was not immediately clear why the student ran out of the school.

February 9, 2012

Furman University announced Thursday morning that it will add two new teams to its athletic department. University President Rod Smolla said the school will add men's and women's Division I lacrosse teams. Smolla said they were adding the lacrosse program because it is a sport that strengthens the school's academic and athletic profile and creates an opportunity to recruit students on many levels. The new lacrosse program was made possible through an anonymous \$5 million donation from a Furman alum, with a portion of the donation earmarked for the new program. This addition gives the school a total of 20 varsity intercollegiate sports, made up of 10 women's programs and 10 men's programs. The school has been a member of the Southern Conference since 1936. The last time Furman added a new sport was during the 1994-95 school year with the addition of women's soccer. Lacrosse athletes are known as successful athletes, including NCAA graduation success rates. According to the NCAA figures released in May, women's lacrosse topped all 18 NCAA-sanctioned sports and men's lacrosse was the best among any men's sport offered in Division I. "Furman University is excited to field women's and men's lacrosse teams and join the fastest growing sport in the NCAA," said director of athletics Dr. Gary Clark. "Our goal is to hire women's and men's coaches in the next couple of months to begin the recruiting process necessary to field teams by the 2015 spring season." Clark said the teams will be introduced as varsity sports beginning with the 2014-15 school year.

February 20, 2012

Gov. Nikki Haley said her proposed budget for the next fiscal year increases money for public schools. But a closer look shows her recommendations would actually decrease state funding by nearly \$80 million. The Republican governor is correct only by disregarding some pots of money. Her proposal represents an increase in recurring money for K-12 schools, when factoring in all state revenue sources -- chiefly, the penny of the state sales tax that goes directly to education programs. However, Haley's proposal eliminates anything funded this school year with one-time money. That includes \$56 million legislators added to the budget to boost a key funding source that pays primarily for teacher salaries -- money they added over her veto. The full House budget-writing committee will begin debating the budget this week.

March 8, 2012

The South Carolina Supreme Court has changed its mind and decided that in some cases, divorced parents who pay child support may also have to pay for their children's college education. In a 3-2 decision Wednesday, the justices reversed a ruling it made in 2010 about divorced parents and their requirements to pay for college. The justices say a college education is critical to being successful, and children of divorced parents should have the same right to a college education as they would have had if their parents had stayed married. The case involved a Midlands couple that divorced in 1993. The father first agreed to pay for his son's Newberry College education, but changed his mind. A Family Court judge ruled for the father.

March 8, 2012

Spring is less than two weeks away, and some college students are working to spruce up an Upstate woman's home. The students volunteering are from the University of Virginia. They're assisting the Spartanburg County Fuller Center to help make some major repairs to Peggy Foster's home. The Fuller Center says it would have cost thousands of dollars to pay for the repairs, and the students tell us it warms their hearts to give back. "It helps reinforce what I believe in, the call to serve others," said UVA junior Christopher Reuter. "It's amazing! I am so blessed, and they're angels sent by God to help me," said Foster. Foster says she lives on a fixed income and is thankful for the students and the Fuller Center. The students have assistance from R and C Maintenance here in the upstate to help with the project. They're expected to be finished by Friday.

March 13, 2012

At this point, it's still unknown why a Chardon High School student walked into his school cafeteria Monday morning in a suburb of Cleveland and shot into a group of students, wounding four and killing one. While reports and rumors fly as to whether or not the gunman had given any warning signs of what he was planning, or whether the students he shot at were targeted for a particular reason, it will take days and weeks to sort out just what happened, and what could have been done to prevent it. Still, in the 13 years since the Columbine massacre pushed school shootings to the front of media headlines and many parents' concerns, the trends seem to be improving in terms of student-initiated shootings. One possible reason: heightened awareness of the problem on the part of parents, teachers, and fellow students, who may be more willing to act on early warning signs. "After the mid-90s when this became a major issue, I think now people have seen what can happen when you don't report things and aren't coming forward, and there's a lot more awareness," says Kevin Quinn, first vice president and public information officer for the National Association of School Resource Officers, and a resource officer at an Arizona high school. "I don't think kids are as apt to keep things quiet anymore." This month, the federal government released the most recent Indicators of School Crime and Safety report, which puts school-related violent deaths at an all-time low since it began tracking such deaths in 1992. It reported 33 such deaths for the 2009-10 school year. Twenty-five of those were considered homicides – also the lowest since 1992 (tied with the 2002-03 school year). The 2006-07 school year had the highest number of deaths, with 63. Still, those numbers – while the most comprehensive statistics available – don't shed much light on school shootings, or on the specific sort of student-led shooting that seems to have occurred in Chardon. No central database of shooting incidents exists, and the incidents can vary so much by type – accidental shootings and suicides; gang-related shootings and those carried out by an adult shooter near a school or in a parking lot; those that don't result in any deaths – that it can be hard to pin down exact numbers. In the years leading up to Columbine, where 12 students and a teacher were killed in a carefully orchestrated attack by two seniors who then killed themselves, such shootings first started to gain attention. There were random shootings in places like Springfield, Ore.; Jonesboro, Ark.; and West Paducah, Ky., in which students killed and wounded dozens of fellow students and teachers. Since Columbine, there have been others, although some of the most prominent and deadly – at Virginia Tech in 2007 and at Northern Illinois University in 2008 – were on college campuses, with older gunmen. Another particularly deadly incident occurred in Red Lake, Minn., on the Indian reservation there, when a 16-year-old boy killed 7 and wounded 5 at his high school, before killing himself. "There do seem to be fewer [shootings], but the shift we've seen in the past few years has been more around the lone-wolf actor," says Kenneth Trump, president of National School Safety and Security Services, a Cleveland-based consulting firm that specializes in school safety. The common threads in today's shootings, says Mr. Trump, often include a lone shooter who may not have given many indicators of what he is planning, undiagnosed and untreated mental health issues, and ballooning social media that can make it tougher for administrators and others to keep on top of any warning signs that do exist. In the Chardon incident, Trump says there are already rumors that there may have been indicators on Twitter the night before the shooting, though nothing has been confirmed. But in other cases, he says, Twitter and Facebook are often where indicators surface. One of the more recent school shootings also occurred in Northern Ohio, when a 14-year-old student at Cleveland's SuccessTech Academy shot and wounded two fellow students and two teachers before killing himself. A more recent incident that gained significant media attention occurred in Marinette, Wis., when a 15-year-old left his classroom to get guns from his locker, and returned to hold his class hostage for several hours. During a standoff with police, he shot himself in the head. Despite the seeming decline in shootings, Trump says he's concerned about several factors that could lead to more incidents in the future: the current focus on bullying rather than diagnosing and treating mental illness; the cut in funding for training and school safety programs; and the fact that the current generation of students and administrators – most of whom weren't

around when Columbine occurred – may have grown complacent."You add up those factors and it's the perfect storm to start this whole cycle back up again," says Trump

March 22, 2012

Lander University police said three students were assaulted Wednesday night on campus and officers were still searching for the suspects. Megan Price with University Relations and Publications said three female students were attacked by two male suspects about 11 p.m. inside their on-campus apartment in Bearcat Village. Price said the suspects forcibly entered the apartment at gunpoint, and several persons-of-interest, who are not Lander students, have been interviewed. Lander University police and the State Law Enforcement Division are still searching for the suspects. Students were notified about 12:30 a.m. by text message from Lander University police that there were two armed and dangerous men wearing hoodies on campus. A student shared the text message they received from campus police that read, "Attention! Armed and dangerous 2 whi/male in the area wearing blk hoodies. Assaulted 3 students. Take safety precautions/lock doors&windows." Price said one suspect was described as a 6' and 200 pounds and the other suspect was approximately 5'10" and 180 pounds. Both were wearing dark clothing and "hoodie" type sweatshirts. As of 7 a.m., police said they have two persons of interest in custody and the students who were attacked are expected to be okay. The school's President Daniel Ball said in addition to the text messages, the university sent out emails to students Thursday morning. Ball said two of the victims have been released from the hospital while the third is still being treated for non life-threatening injuries. Anyone with information is asked to contact Lander University Police at 864-388-8222. Lander University is located in Greenwood. It is a small, public university with a student body of about 3,000 students, with about 1,100 students living on campus.

March 26, 2012

Not too long ago, Apple conducted a press conference in New York detailing new strategies and software to turn the iPad into a complete textbook replacement for students of any age. After rattling off the many reasons why textbooks are not as good as computers (weight, lack of up-to-date material, cost, no search, etc), Apple announced iBooks 2, iBooks Author, and an improved iTunes U, all with the goal of completely melding the iPad into the education experience. iBooks 2 is available as a free iPad app for download. The big addition to this app is textbooks. Apple demonstrated a host of new features that make its textbooks superior to paper books. Most importantly, most books will be priced at \$15 or less. We've listed some new features below. Searchable: You can search through entire textbooks for anything easily Glossary: Click on any glossary word and its definition instantly pops up on the right side of the screen New interactive elements: By tilting the iPad from portrait mode to landscape, you can view a book in an entirely new view, focusing on media Videos, slideshows, more: As you'd expect, moving video and other interactive elements are in many of these new textbooks Quizzes: Questions and quizzes built into the book Instant study cards: Perhaps the coolest new feature is the ability to highlight text and instantly turn that text into a study card, which looks just like a note card you'd use to study for a test. Flash cards can be automatically generated and shuffled into random order Automatic updates: Books will stay up to date forever. You own a book forever and can re-download it from the cloud anytime The new iBooks store now has a textbook category and will have books for on every subject, every grade level, for every student, according to Apple. Textbooks are somewhat large at about 1GB or more, so we expect more 64GB (or higher) iPads will be sold in the future. We don't yet know if you can save your notes to the cloud so they are there when you re-download your book, or if you can share notes with other students. iBooks Author To compliment the new iBooks 2 experience, Apple created iBooks Author and made it available as a free download on the Mac App Store, starting today. The software appears to easily let anyone create a textbook with relative ease. Templates for things like math or science books are included and you can drag text, video, or images into place. It can also import Word files and automatically fill in pages. Adding glossary terms is as easy as highlighting a word and writing in a definition. Advanced developers can manipulate books using HTML5. The program is also able to create kids books and other types of books as well. Several textbook publishers are already onboard including Pearson, Houghton Mifflin, McGraw Hill, and Harcourt. McGraw Hill books on Algebra 1, Biology, Chemistry, Geometry, and Physics are already available and Pearson is making two books available as well. iTunes U gets a makeover Apple also announced upgrades to iTunes U, which it boasts already has more than 1000 universities using it and 700 million downloads. The new iTunes U will let instructors create entire online courses. Some of the new features are below. --Teachers can post assignments or send messages to all students, who get a notification when there's a new message --Students can read a book chapter and mark an assignment as complete --

Streaming lectures are also possible --Course materials can link to PDFs, apps, audio files, video, textbooks, other books, or Web links --Students can rate courses like they do apps in iTunes. One click to download materials --Of course, it's fully integrated with iBooks 2 --K-12 grades can now sign up for iTunes U as well --Available in 123 countries Questions remain There is no doubt that the services shown today are impressive, but it's hard to say if they will be widely adopted or not. There are also key questions that remain. Not all pre-college students can afford iPads (or college students). There also isn't an announced way for students to get textbooks for free through their school, as is currently the case in public elementary, middle, and high schools in the United States. Then there's sharing. All of this sounds great, but can students share notes, save notes to the cloud, or lend books to one another? Perhaps the biggest Achilles heel to the whole system is that you need an iPad to take advantage of it. Requiring that all students buy iPads is a tough, and potentially expensive, choice, especially when many of them might already have an Android, Amazon, or Windows 8 tablet (I'm talking future kids). Apple's complete resistance to making this program available on anything outside of its own hardware will undoubtedly limit its impact. Still, when I was growing up, every classroom had an Apple computer in it. That was how I learned how to use computers. If the company can find a way to reach out to educators on that level, it could have a huge impact. Doubts aside, we already know Microsoft is a bit scared. Today, the company put out its own blog post about how Windows 7 tablets are great for education. Unfortunately, the post didn't have much to say.

March 30, 2012

Anderson County deputies said minor injuries were reported after a school bus crash Friday afternoon. The crash happened about 4:30 p.m. on Old Williamston Road near Cobbs Way. Deputies said that a vehicle crashed into a school bus. They said one student was complaining of dizziness, but no one else was injured. The South Carolina Highway Patrol was investigating the crash.

Attachments



Environment

**PROGRAMS ADDRESSING PROBLEM/NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **ENVIRONMENT**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

Wildfire Prevention
World Wildlife Fund,
Arbor Day Foundation
Discovering Nature

January 10, 2012

The National Weather Service said Monday that a heavily-used transmitter for its weather radio system was broken. Officials said the transmitter on Paris Mountain in Greenville County, which broadcasts on a frequency of 162.55 megahertz, experienced a major hardware failure. They said that transmitter will be off the air for an indeterminate amount of time. The Weather Service said that during the outage, residents who typically use that transmitter to receive weather information via the radio need to reprogram their receivers to the following frequencies: ☐ For the southern and western Upstate: Tune to a frequency of 162.425 megahertz. ☐ For the northern Upstate: Tune to a frequency of 162.400 megahertz

January 27, 2012

Forecasters said the possibility of heavy rain and severe thunderstorms exists for Thursday night. FOX Carolina chief meteorologist Kendra Kent said rain will increase in coverage Thursday evening and will become heavy at times. Kent said there isn't much energy for storms to work with in the western Carolinas, but there will be some strong dynamics in play. She said that means there could be some isolated strong or severe thunderstorms late Thursday night. The same line caused few reports of damage as it moved across parts of Mississippi and Alabama on Thursday. The Storm Prediction Center has placed parts of the Upstate in a slight risk for severe weather, with damaging winds being the primary threat. Isolated tornadoes were also listed as a threat. Kent said 1 to 2 inches of rain are possible between Thursday evening and midday Friday. She said skies should begin to clear by Friday afternoon.

January 31, 2012

A rockslide closed all westbound lanes along Interstate 40 in Haywood County Tuesday morning. The North Carolina Department of Transportation closed the westbound lanes near exit 20 and US 276 after a rockslide in Tennessee near exit 451 about 4:20 a.m. NCDOT said the road is expected to remain closed for the next few weeks. Drivers are asked to use caution and follow detour signs. Traffic traveling west to Tennessee should take I-40 West to I-240 West (exit 53B) in Asheville to I-26 West (exit 4A). Then follow I-26 West from Asheville to I-81 South (exit 8A) in Tennessee and back onto I-40. The detour route is approximately 53 miles. Originally the road was closed near mile marker 7. NCDOT said eastbound traffic was unaffected by the rockslide. Tennessee Department of Transportation said there is no estimate for when I-40 westbound will reopen. TDOT Geotechnical Engineers are evaluating the slide and are currently developing a plan to stabilize the mountainside. They said an emergency contract will also be initiated to clean-up debris.

February 9, 2012

On Monday, crews in Greenville will start a project aimed at stabilizing a section of the [banks](#) of the Reedy River. Workers will focus on a 450-foot section of the [bank](#) behind The Peace Center and the Riverplace building. They will remove a sandbar from the river and place rocks along the bank to help prevent erosion. The project should be completed in about three months.

March 8, 2012

President Barack Obama made his way to the Carolinas Wednesday to announce a new incentive program to encourage people to use alternative energy. He spoke to crowds at Daimler Trucking in Mount Holly, NC, just outside of Charlotte. For many, it was a thrill. "I'm overwhelmed, excited," said 28-year Daimler employee, Christina Davis. "I'm just full of tears just to be able to be here to see our president. I'm just thankful, so thankful to be here!" About 300 Daimler employees, out of about 1,400 at the Mt. Holly plant, won a lottery for tickets to see the president speak. "Most of the time, you can go see a president somewhere, but it's rare when they come to see you," said Alan Herrin, who went back to work at 3:30 p.m. for his shift after the event. Herrin said crews worked until 2 a.m., cleaning up and prepping for the event Tuesday night. Herrin said he is happy to have his job at all because in the fall of 2008 and spring of 2009, all but a skeleton crew were laid off. In May of 2010, some employees were rehired, and within the last year, new employees got on the payroll. The company assembles trucks, and Obama stopped there because their trucks are fueled by natural gas. "These trucks can save \$15,000 each year," Obama told the crowd. "I want everybody to think about what that means for [businesses](#)... what it means for consumers. It is real progress, and it's happening because of American workers and American know-how. It's happening because of you!" The president announced a new initiative to incentivize people and companies to buy and use vehicles that use cleaner alternative fuel. His message sang the same tune as the workers at Daimler, who belong to the United Automakers of America union: Make the vehicles in America, which creates American jobs. Mt. Holly Councilman Perry Toomy said he hopes Obama "can deliver on most of the things that he said." But Toomy said he is hesitant because he hasn't seen enough change.

March 22, 2012

Firefighters battled a massive blaze Wednesday morning in Travelers Rest. Greenville County deputies said the fire was under control about 6:15 a.m. and that no one was injured. Authorities said a detached garage is what caught fire along Tubbs Mountain Road at Lindsay Lake Road. North Greenville Fire District Chief Lee Kelly said they received the call about 5:30 a.m. and it took them three hours to get the flames under control. Kelly said they don't know what caused the fire, but it was a wrecker company's building that had gasoline and welding equipment inside, which caused an explosion. No one was inside the building or was injured in the fire, according to Kelly.

March 27, 2012

The bodies of a man and a woman have been found at one of 16 homes destroyed by a wildfire that has forced hundreds to flee the mountainous area southwest of Denver, authorities said Tuesday. A third person was missing from the same area where the man and woman were found. The body of a woman was found outside the burned home on Monday evening and a man's body was found inside on Tuesday, said Daniel Hatlestad of the Jefferson County Incident Management Team. Authorities do not yet know whether the deaths were caused by the fire, which has grown to about 7 square miles. The fire is burning several miles and mountain ridges west of Denver's tightly populated southwestern suburbs, which are not under threat. The area of pines and grassland is mountainous and sparsely populated, dotted with hamlets and the occasional expensive home. It is about 25 miles southwest of Denver at an altitude that ranges from 7,000 to 8,200 feet. About 900 homes have been evacuated and the residents of another 6,500 houses were warned to be ready to evacuate on Tuesday because of a spot fire sparked outside the main fire. Kelley had said earlier that the wildfire may have been a controlled burn from last week that sprang back to life because of strong wind gusts. Ryan Lockwood, a spokesman for the Colorado State Forest Service, said his agency conducted the controlled burn on Thursday on land belonging to the Denver Water Board as part of an ongoing attempt to reduce fire danger. Such burns are common in the West to thin out vegetation in the hopes of

preventing fires. "This has been going on for the past year," Lockwood said. Stacy Chesney, a spokeswoman for Denver Water, said decisions about prescribed burns are left to the state forest service, which has a contract for protecting land that feeds into reservoirs. Chesney said wildfires can damage water sheds, so the agency was "trying to be proactive." Spokesmen for Gov. John Hickenlooper and the Colorado State Forest Service that contracted for the controlled burn said they did not know if the state could be held liable for damages from the fire. Wind gusts that reached near 90 mph fanned the flames on Monday, preventing air crews from spraying retardant and keeping firefighters mostly on the defensive. With winds lighter Tuesday, firefighters were attacking the fire on the ground and dropping slurry from an air tanker. By midday Tuesday, officials were urging patience in a meeting with about 60 frustrated evacuees gathered at Conifer High School. The evacuated residents groaned when Hatlestad of the Jefferson County Incident Management Team announced that the fire was 0 percent contained and expected to spread to the northeast with the afternoon winds. Hatlestad repeatedly told residents asking about their home streets, "I can't tell you where the fire will go." Hatlestad had no estimate when they could get home or when homeowners would find out whether their homes have been spared. Some evacuees shook their heads. Others scoffed. Hatlestad told them, "Know that there are hundreds of people out there right now working to save your homes." Residents remained visibly anxious, checking their phones every few moments for Twitter updates on the fire's path. Many gathered around laptops to identify their own burned property while waiting for officials to tell them whether their homes survived. Among the frustrated evacuees was 47-year-old John Ryan, whose home was right in the northeasterly path of the fire Tuesday afternoon. He urged authorities to speed identification of the victims and the burned homes "I understand that it's a difficult situation, but it's our house, and we're in the target zone," Ryan said, then went back to checking his phone. Video from KUSA-TV's helicopter showed one home burned to its foundation with a flicker burning in the rubble. Another home appeared untouched, a car parked in the driveway, although land across the road was charred. One evacuee left behind a Corvette and a small airplane to escape the flames. Cindi Sjaardema said it was the first time in 34 years that she has had to flee the area. "We decided, 'Let's move now,' thinking we'd make two trips. But when we left, we passed a checkpoint and they said we couldn't go back," she said. "My husband argued with the guy, (and) said, 'I left a Corvette back there, I'm going back.' But I said, 'No way. It's insured. It's just stuff.' We got out, and thank God."

March 30, 2012

With farmers in eastern North Carolina still recovering from [Hurricane Irene](#), cotton and tobacco crops are expected to drop this year, while some of the state's other major crops will increase. The U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a forecast on Friday predicting that North Carolina farmers will plant about 700,000 acres of cotton, a 13 percent drop from 2011. Plantings of flue-cured tobacco will likely be around 150,000 acres, a drop of roughly 10,000 acres. The hurricane devastated many farms east of I-95 last year, particularly tobacco crops. State Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said that other crops are looking more robust. He said farmers are expected to plant roughly 100,00 acres of peanuts this year, the highest total since 2008. Corn, soybeans and sweet potatoes are also increasing in acreage.

Attachments



Government

**PROGRAMS ADDRESSING PROBLEM OR NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **GOVERNMENT**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
Sundays	10:00 am	FOX NEWS SUNDAY

Description:

Fox News Sunday is a national weekly program with current events and political issues. (60:00)

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

US Coast Guard
SC National Guard
Ready.gov

January 10, 2012

Presidential candidates Rick Perry and Newt Gingrich aren't in the top tier of the New Hampshire polls, which could explain why they're getting a head start on stumping here in South Carolina. Gov. Rick Perry made multiple stops in the Upstate Monday, the last at Stax's Original Restaurant in Greenville. He said his first move as president would be repealing the health care act. He wants to pull back the federal government's hand and let South Carolina to make its own laws, like the voter ID bill. Former Congressman Newt Gingrich was in New Hampshire Monday, but he made time for a tele-town hall meeting, on the phone with folks in our state. They both seem to be enjoying warm welcomes and are hoping South Carolina will turn the race around for them. "A good solid Reagan conservative is what we need in this race," Gingrich told callers on the tele-town hall meeting, "and I think that's what I bring to it, and I think with your help that's what we're going to get done." "If you're going to trade out a Washington insider, it doesn't make any difference if it's a Republican insider or a Democratic insider, do you think Washington's going to change any?" Perry asked supporters and customers at Stax's. Perry will stay in South Carolina Tuesday through the voting in New Hampshire. Gingrich and others will come down to the Palmetto State Wednesday. The primary vote is on Jan. 21.

January 31, 2012

A new budget report released Tuesday predicts the government will run a \$1.1 trillion deficit in the fiscal year that ends in September, a slight dip from last year but still very high by any measure. The Congressional Budget Office report also says that annual deficits will remain in the \$1 trillion range for the next several years if Bush-era tax cuts slated to expire in December are extended, as commonly assumed - and if Congress is unable to live within the tight "caps" the lawmakers themselves placed on agency budgets last year. The report is yet another reminder of the perilous fiscal situation the government is in, but it's commonly assumed that President Barack Obama and lawmakers in Congress will be able to accomplish little on the deficit issue during an election year. The report was slightly more pessimistic than CBO's most recent projections last summer and would mean the fourth straight year of trillion-dollar-plus deficits. The first wave of statements from lawmakers had a familiar ring as each party cast blame on the other. "Four straight years of trillion-dollar deficits, no credible plan to lift the crushing burden of [debt](#)," said House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wis., "The president and his party's leaders have fallen short in their duty to tackle our generation's most pressing fiscal and economic challenges." "We will not solve this problem unless both sides, Democrats and Republicans, are willing to move off their fixed positions

and find common ground," said Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad, D-N.D. "Republicans must be willing to put revenue on the table." The CBO study also predicts modest economic growth of 2 percent this year and forecasts that the unemployment rate will be 8.9 percent on Election Day. That is based on an assumption that President Barack Obama will fail to win renewal of payroll tax cuts and jobless benefits by the end of next month. That jobless rate is higher than the rates that contributed to losses by Presidents Jimmy Carter (7.5 percent) and George H.W. Bush (7.4 percent). The agency also predicts that unemployment will average 9.1 percent in 2013 and remain at 7 percent or above through 2015.

CBO Director Douglas Elmendorf, however, told reporters that extending the two percentage point cut in Social Security payroll taxes would only lift the economy by perhaps one-fourth of a percentage point this year and would likely yield only a 0.1 to 0.2 percentage point drop in the jobless rate. The agency's budget projections are worse than those issued last summer, in large part because its views on the economy are more pessimistic now. Last August, CBO predicted a \$953 billion deficit for 2012 fiscal year. Corporate tax receipts are sharply lower than anticipated last year. On the economy as a whole, CBO now predicts 2 percent growth from the fourth quarter of 2011 to the fourth quarter of this year, a 0.7 percentage point drop from its August numbers. Its predictions of the jobless rate are 0.4 percent higher. "We have not had a period of such persistently high unemployment since the Depression," Elmendorf said. The new figures also show that last summer's budget and debt pact has barely made a dent in the government's fiscal woes. The pact imposed \$2.1 trillion in spending cuts over 10 years, but lawmakers are already talking about easing across-the-board spending cuts required under the agreement. The modified estimates predict \$11 trillion in accumulated deficits over the 2013-2022 if the Bush-era cuts in taxes on income, investments, large estates and on families with children are renewed. Obama has proposed largely extending them, but allowing them to expire for upper-income taxpayers. Extending the full range of the Bush tax cuts costs \$5.4 trillion over the coming decade, CBO says. Elmendorf said allowing tax rates to increase for families making more than \$250,000 a year as Obama has proposed would shave perhaps \$1 trillion from the 10-year costs of extending the tax cuts. Last year, Obama and House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, tried but failed to reach a "grand bargain" on the deficit, an effort that got hung up over taxes and cuts to major benefit programs like Medicare. A subsequent attempt by a congressional "supercommittee" to find smaller saving sputtered over the same issues. What's left is a heap of unfinished business that comes to a head at the end of the year: expiring tax cuts and painful across-the-board cuts to the Pentagon and many domestic programs. To top it off, another politically toxic increase in the debt limit will be needed at some point shortly after the November elections. The deficit would require the government to borrow 30 cents of every dollar it spends. Put another way, the deficit will reach 7 percent of the size of the economy, a slight dip from last year's 8.7 percent of gross domestic product. The CBO report shows that the deficit dilemma would largely be solved if the tax cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003 - and renewed in 2010 through the end of this year - were allowed to lapse. Under that scenario, the deficit would drop to \$585 billion in 2013 and to \$220 billion in 2017. But expiration of those tax cuts would slam the economy, CBO said, bringing growth down to a paltry 1.1 percent next year. However, the economy would quickly rebound in 2014 and beyond. Obama is scheduled to release his 2013 budget on Feb. 13.

February 7, 2012

Republican front-runner Mitt Romney battled Rick Santorum and Ron Paul on Tuesday in political caucuses in Minnesota and Colorado, hoping to extend his winning streak in the race for the presidential nomination. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich mounted no significant campaign in either state, looking ahead to primaries elsewhere. Romney prevailed in both Minnesota and Colorado in 2008, the first time he ran for the nomination, but the GOP has become more conservative in both states since then under the influence of tea party activists. There were 37 Republican National Convention delegates at stake in Minnesota and 33 more in Colorado. In addition, Missouri held a non-binding primary on Tuesday. The state picks its delegates at caucuses next month. Santorum, a former Pennsylvania senator, campaigned aggressively in all three states, seeking a breakthrough to revitalize a campaign that has struggled since his narrow first-place finish in the Iowa caucuses a month ago. Paul, a Texas lawmaker, has yet to win a primary or caucus. Romney began the day the leader in the delegate chase, with 101 of the 1,144 needed to capture the nomination at the Republican National Convention this summer in Tampa. Gingrich had 32, Santorum 17 and Paul nine. Taken together, the number of delegates at stake Tuesday was the largest one-day total yet in the Republican race to pick a rival for President Barack Obama. Even so, the campaigning was a pale comparison to the Iowa caucuses or primaries last month in New Hampshire, South Carolina and Florida. Television

advertising was sparse; neither Colorado nor Minnesota hosted a candidates' debate, and there was relatively little campaigning by the contenders themselves until the past few days. The same was true in last weekend's Nevada caucuses, which Romney won on the heels of a Florida primary victory days earlier. The same pattern holds in Maine, where caucuses finish on Saturday. Not until primaries in Michigan and Arizona on Feb. 28 is the campaign likely to regain the intensity that characterized the first few weeks of the year. Then it roars back to life with a 10-state Super Tuesday on March 6 with 416 convention delegates at stake. Santorum, in particular, hoped to seize the relative lull to redeem the promise of his Iowa victory. He campaigned more aggressively this week than any of the other contenders, and he spent the day hopscotching from Colorado to Minnesota to Missouri in hopes of nailing down a victory in one of the states. Touting himself as a true conservative - a slap at Gingrich - he sought to undermine Romney's electability claim at the same time by predicting the former Massachusetts governor would lose to Obama.

Romney responded by assailing Santorum as an advocate of congressional earmarks - shifting the criticism he had leveled at Gingrich when the Georgian seemed a more imposing threat. In the hours before the caucuses convened, the front-runner sought to lower expectations. "Mitt Romney is not going to win every contest," Rich Beeson, the campaign's political director, wrote in a memo for public consumption. "John McCain lost 19 states in 2008, and we expect our opponents will notch a few wins, too," Beeson wrote. McCain, the Arizona senator, won the Republican nomination four years ago. In fact, Colorado and Minnesota were among the states that McCain failed to win, and he lost them to Romney. In the four years since, the GOP has become more conservative in both. That posed a challenge for Romney, who runs as the Republican most likely to defeat Obama and is still trying to establish his credentials among tea party activists suspicious of a one-time moderate who backed abortion rights. Two years ago in Minnesota, establishment candidates for governor were swept aside in the primary, and tea party-backed insurgents for governor and the Senate in Colorado won the party nominations. In all three cases, Democrats won in the general election that fall. Gingrich spent the day campaigning in Ohio, one of the primary states on March 6. His campaign went into a downward spiral after he won the South Carolina primary in an upset. The former speaker was routed in the Florida primary to Romney, then finished a distant second in Nevada over the weekend.

February 9, 2012

A new South Carolina House bill could put new, tougher requirements on groups that register people to vote. But opponents fear the requirements will be so strict, fewer people will be voting in the state. The bill would require any group that conducts voter registration drives to register with the state elections commission and turn in voter forms within five days of signing people up. Plus, each volunteer must sign a statement swearing they will uphold state election laws and could face fines up to \$1,000 for each voter registration form not turned over to election officials. But one local group called RISE in the upstate feels it's not needed. "I think it's trying to deter people from voting," says RISE Volunteer Derrick Quarles. The bill's sponsor, State Rep. Alan Clemmons, R-Myrtle Beach, says it's about holding third party groups accountable for properly handling a person's right to vote. The bill is still being debated in the State House and will come back up again Tuesday, Feb. 21

February 10, 2012

President Barack Obama will announce a plan to accommodate religious employers outraged by a rule that would require them to cover birth control for women free of charge, according to a person familiar with the decision. Obama was expected to make the announcement at the White House Friday. The shift is aimed at containing the political firestorm that erupted after Obama announced in January that religious-affiliated employers had to cover birth control as preventative care for women. Churches and houses of worship were exempt, but all other affiliated organizations were ordered to comply by Aug. 2013. Republican leaders and religious groups, especially Roman Catholics, responded with intense outrage, saying the requirement would force them to violate church teachings and long-held beliefs against contraception. The issue also pushed social issues to the forefront in an election year that had been dominated by the economy. Abortion, contraception and any of the requirements of Obama's health care overhaul law have the potential to galvanize the Republicans' conservative base, critical to voter turnout in the presidential and congressional races. Republicans vowed to reverse the president's policy, with House Speaker John Boehner accusing the administration of violating First Amendment rights and undermining some of the country's most vital institutions, such as Catholic charities, schools and hospitals. The measure also sparked an internal debate at the White House. Vice President Joe Biden, then-chief of staff Bill Daley and deputy national security adviser Denis

McDonough, all Catholics, raised concerns about how the administration proceeded on the policy. On the other side, senior White House advisers Nancy-Ann DeParle, Pete Rouse and David Plouffe argued for the need to ensure coverage for all without exception, as a matter of women's health and fairness. The person with knowledge of Obama's decision requested anonymity in order to speak in advance of the official announcement.

February 20, 2012

Xavier Alvarez was in good company when he stood up at a public meeting and called himself a wounded war veteran who had received the top military award, the Medal of Honor. Alvarez was lying about his medal, his wounds and his military service, but he wasn't the first man to invent war exploits. He was, however, one of the first people prosecuted under a 2006 federal law aimed at curbing false claims of military valor. Concerns that the law improperly limits speech and turns people into criminals for things they say, rather than do, are at the heart of the Supreme Court's review of his case and the Stolen Valor Act. Veterans groups have come to the aid of the Obama administration, which calls the law a narrowly crafted effort to protect the system of military awards that was established during the Revolutionary war by Gen. George Washington. The high court will hear the case Wednesday, which is Washington's 280th birthday. "They're committing fraud. They're impersonating somebody else. They take on attributes of somebody else, attributes of a hero who served honorably," said Pam Sterner, whose college term paper calling for the law wound up in the hands of members of Congress. "When you do that, impersonating someone else, that's fraud, not freedom of speech." Civil liberties groups, writers, publishers and news media outlets, including The Associated Press, have told the justices they worry the law, and especially the administration's defense of it, could lead to more attempts by government to regulate speech. When he established military decorations in 1782, seven years before he was elected as the nation's first president, Washington himself also prescribed severe military punishment for soldiers who purported to be medal winners but weren't. Since then, many men have embellished their war records, and some have won special recognition. It long has been a federal crime to wear unearned medals, but mere claims of being decorated were beyond the reach of law enforcement. The House of Representatives has more than once voted to name a post office after men who claimed awards they never received. The Air Force named an award after a man who falsely claimed to have survived the Bataan Death March and been awarded the Silver Star in World War II. The Boxing Writers of America named its perseverance award after the late Pat Putnam of Sports Illustrated because of his made-up tale of surviving a Chinese prisoner of war camp in the Korean War and receiving a Navy Cross. The Stolen Valor Act aimed to solve that problem, and garnered significant support in Congress during a time of war. "The admiration and respect for the military increased dramatically after 9/11 and the false claims, as well," said Thomas A. Cottone Jr., a retired FBI agent who investigated phony award cases. Alvarez made his claims by way of introducing himself as an elected member of the Three Valleys Municipal Water District in Pomona, Calif. There is nothing to suggest that he received anything in exchange or that listeners especially believed him. Even Alvarez' lawyers acknowledged their client sometimes has trouble telling the truth. "Xavier Alvarez lied," they declare in the first sentence of their Supreme Court brief and go on to recount six separate lies in the next few lines. He lied when he claimed he played hockey for the Detroit Red Wings, married a Mexican starlet who made paparazzi swoon, was an engineer, rescued the American ambassador during the Iranian hostage crisis and was shot when he went back for the U.S. flag. Alvarez also lied, they said, when he talked about his military service. But the lies Alvarez told harmed no one, they said, so what he did couldn't be considered fraud. A three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco struck down the law as an unconstitutional restraint on free speech and said the government might instead invest in an awards database that would make it harder for people to lay claim to medals they never won. Last month, the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver upheld the law in a separate case, saying the First Amendment does not always protect false statements. The issue might never have reached this stage if not for the efforts of Sterner, and her husband, Doug. He is a decorated Vietnam veteran who has made it his work in recent years to ensure that service members get the recognition they deserve and expose those who falsely claim acts of heroism under fire. Rather than wait for the government to act, Doug Sterner has entered nearly 100,000 award citations since Civil War in his online database, including all 3,475 Medal of Honor winners in U.S. history. His archive is used by the Military Times newspapers, published by Gannett Co. Pam Sterner went back to school in her early 40s at Colorado State University in Pueblo, Colo. In a political science course, she wrote a paper that grew out of her husband's frustrations over phony award claimants whose worst punishment was public embarrassment. That paper eventually led to the Stolen Valor Act. Doug Sterner's database did not save Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, from some embarrassment when he invited cameras and reporters to watch him pin medals on an elderly Korean War veteran in June. The veteran, Myron Brown of Utah, said his Distinguished Service Cross and Silver Star were awarded belatedly, and he asked Chaffetz to present them to him publicly. After the ceremony took place, Sterner and

others raised questions about the medals and the Pentagon confirmed to Chaffetz in December that they were not authentic. "Others have been burned by this. I have too, but I want to solve the problem," Chaffetz told the Salt Lake Tribune. He is planning a hearing of the House Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee he leads to explore creating a government-run awards database.

March 8, 2012

A bill banning drivers from texting or reading electronic messages on South Carolina's roadways has received key approval in the House. The House approved the measure 93-15 on Wednesday. It faces another perfunctory vote before heading to the Senate. Sponsoring Rep. Don Bowen said he became passionate about the dangers of texting behind the wheel because his seven grandchildren will all soon be driving. The Anderson Republican said the bill puts technology and responsibility in sync. He hopes it alerts drivers to a danger he compares to drunken driving. Opponents question how texting is worse than other forms of distracted driving and argue enforcement will be difficult. The measure exempts messages sent through voice-operated devices. Similar measures limiting texting and cell phone use while driving have died in the Legislature.

March 8, 2012

Republican activists foresee a long, lumbering presidential campaign that almost certainly will nominate Mitt Romney but may leave him weakened in a fall battle against President Barack Obama. Interviews Wednesday with GOP officials and strategists in several states found no panic or calls for Romney to crank up his criticisms of Rick Santorum to secure the nomination. But they expressed varying degrees of worry that Santorum's and Newt Gingrich's attacks on Romney are inflicting wounds that might not fully heal by Nov. 6. "The shelf life is 48 hours for a lot of this," including small-bore disputes over policy differences, said Steve Lombardo, a veteran of many GOP campaigns. "The bigger concern is the negatives the governor has built up on his unfavorable rating," Lombardo said, referring to impressions that Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, waffles on key principles and can't relate to working-class people. "Those can be harder to reverse," he said, and Romney would like to address them without potshots from his own party. South Carolina Republican Chairman Chad Connelly is more upbeat. He says Romney won't suffer from a protracted nominating process. "A longer, drawn-out primary engages people across the nation," Connelly said. He said Obama put the Rev. Jeremiah Wright controversy behind him because he dealt with it forcefully in the spring of 2008, months before the general election. The "swiftboat" attacks hit Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry much later in the 2004 election cycle, "and he never recovered," Connelly said. But Mike McKenna, a GOP consultant from Richmond, Va., said Romney's struggles in the primaries and caucuses point to serious problems this fall. Romney won 41 percent of the primary vote in his native state of Michigan to Santorum's 38 percent, McKenna noted, calling it "hardly a dazzling performance." Romney's margin was even smaller in Ohio, even though he again heavily outspent Santorum. McKenna, who conducts focus groups and polls, sees ominous trends. He predicts that one-fourth to one-third of all Republicans "will not vote for Romney" if he's the nominee this fall. Nelson Warfield, an adviser in Bob Dole's 1996 presidential campaign and Texas Gov. Rick Perry's recently ended bid, is nearly as gloomy. "The mathematics of the race are very troubling for Mitt Romney," Warfield said. "He can't put this away. The big question for Republicans is: Will his problems go away when he's the nominee, or will they carry on into the general election?" John Ulliot, a Republican strategist and former Senate aide, said the long, difficult primary "just weakens Romney in the general election. It saps resources, it keeps him from focusing on President Obama." Other Republican campaign veterans are more optimistic, although few predict an easy path for Romney. Rich Galen, a former aide to Gingrich and former Vice President Dan Quayle, said Romney's hard-hitting TV ads are having less impact than they did a few months ago. Voters now know Gingrich and Santorum much better, Galen said, and they are less shocked by negative information and more willing to draw independent conclusions about the candidates. Rather than hit Santorum harder, Galen said, Romney should "turn the tables and show how smart he is, how he can do the things he needs to do" to be a good general election candidate and president. Chris LaCivita, a Virginia-based GOP strategist, said Romney's steady collection of party delegates makes it almost impossible for Santorum and Gingrich to prevail, and they should step aside for the party's good. Jason Thielman, a Montana-based political consultant, said disgruntled Republican voters will rally around Romney and focus on Obama's record this fall. "What you see is people starting to realize this train left the station, and it's going to be the one that will deliver the passengers," Thielman said. "Folks are punching their ticket and getting on board."

March 13, 2012

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is touring the state promoting her executive budget for 2012-2013. Haley's "Tax Relief Tour" and budget were unveiled Monday. She said her proposed budget falls within a spending cap, with several priorities in mind including "transparency and truth-in-budgeting, living within our means, using recurring dollars for recurring needs, strengthening the state's reserves and delivering meaningful tax relief to South Carolinians." The proposed tax plan has several major elements. One major component would phase out the corporate income tax over four years. Haley said businesses would save \$61.6 million in the first year, which could be reinvested in jobs and infrastructure. Her plan promotes the consolidation of six individual income tax brackets into three while cutting rates, which Haley said would save most taxpayers about \$84 for filers with at least \$5,600 per year of taxable income. Haley also wants to amend the South Carolina Constitution to establish property tax rates by statute, saying it would make them easier to reduce in the future. In addition to saving South Carolinians money on their taxes, Haley's plan would cut education spending and state workers would not get a raise, which contrasts the House's plan that includes a 2 percent raise for state workers and \$153 million increase to education spending. Haley has criticized the House plan, saying it does not include her proposal to cut \$140 million in corporate and personal income taxes. A part of Haley's plan is to remove the annual tax-free weekend held in August while lowering the state sales tax all year long. Her tax tour took her to Greenville Tuesday morning with a stop at Carolina Machine and Tool. Haley continued to put pressure on house members to pass her plan. "What we are asking them to do is take 140 million out of their budget and commit to the people of this state and show they mean what they say and get it done," Haley said. Haley is scheduled to make stops in Aiken and North Charleston later in the day. She is also scheduled to attend the swearing-in ceremony of new Lieutenant Governor Glenn McConnell at the State House.

March 15, 2012

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley is announcing a new policy spelling out what records her office must maintain. Haley's office and the state archives agency signed the document this week, representing a first in the 39-year history of the state Public Records Act. Archives director Eric Emerson said his agency prepared a records retention policy for former Gov. John West in the early '70s, but it was never signed. Haley's new policy follows criticism about deleted emails. The issue arose last fall after open records requests from media outlets revealed Haley's office routinely deleted emails. Haley announced shortly before Christmas that her office was working to clarify what records should be kept. Her office said it was working under a policy leftover from previous governors that was written before emails.

March 15, 2012

The South Carolina House has unanimously approved a \$6.5 billion state spending plan that gives most employees a 2 percent raise, boosts state law enforcement and provides health coverage to more children. The House voted 115-0 on Wednesday to give its approval to the plan for state taxes. The chamber then voted 113-0 on a separate measure designating \$105 million from a rainy-day fund. The measures face another vote in the House on Thursday before heading to the Senate. House Ways and Means Chairman Brian White thanked members for a civil debate that began Monday. The House last approved a budget unanimously in 2008. House Speaker Bobby Harrell notes the budget contains more than \$625 million in tax relief. That's mostly property tax relief due to previously passed laws.

March 22, 2012

South Carolina legislators are trying again to boot Occupy Columbia protesters from Statehouse grounds. A House Judiciary panel advanced Thursday a bill banning camping and sleeping around the state capitol. The full committee is set to meet later specifically to move the measure to the floor. Occupy Columbia protesters returned Wednesday with several tents as emergency regulations barring their around-the-clock presence expired. The measure approved by the Senate last week has the same wording as the emergency rule adopted in December by the Budget and Control Board. The protesters dispersed Dec. 23 after a federal judge validated the rule. But the temporary regulation expired at midnight Sunday. Regulations created through the normal process are in a 30-day waiting period and would need legislative approval. That could take weeks.

March 22, 2012

The Justice Department is seeking to recover millions of dollars from AT&T Corp., alleging the company improperly billed the government for services that are designed for use by the deaf and hard-of-hearing who place calls by typing messages over the Internet. The system has been abused by callers overseas who use it to defraud U.S. merchants by ordering goods with stolen credit cards and counterfeit checks. In response, the federal government ordered telecom companies to register their users. The Justice Department lawsuit says AT&T failed to adopt procedures to detect or prevent fraudulent users from registering. The government says the company feared its call volumes would drop once fraudulent users were prevented from calling on the system. The government reimbursed AT&T \$1.30 per minute for every call on this system.

March 26, 2012

The Supreme Court plunged into debate Monday on the fate of the Obama administration's overhaul of the nation's health care system, starting with pointed questions about a legal issue that could derail the case. Eight of the nine justices fired two dozen questions in less than half hour at Washington attorney Robert Long. He had been appointed by the justices to argue that the case has been brought prematurely because a law bars tax disputes from being heard in the courts before the taxes have been paid. Under the new law, taxpayers who don't purchase health insurance will have to report that omission on tax returns for 2014 and will pay a penalty along with federal income tax. At issue is whether that penalty is a tax. Some of the justices reacted skeptically to the idea that the penalties encapsulated in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act were actually a tax. "What is the parade of horrors?" asked Justice Sonia Sotomayor, if the court decides that penalties are not a tax and the health care case goes forward? Long suggested it could encourage more challenges to the long-standing system in which the general rule is that taxpayers must pay a disputed tax before they can go to court.

March 26, 2012

President Barack Obama warned North Korea and Iran on Monday that their options are few, and their friends fewer, as those nations refuse to back down from actions the world sees as menacing. "By now it should be clear," Obama said, addressing North Korea from the South Korean capital only about 30 miles away. "Your provocations and pursuit of nuclear weapons have not achieved the security you seek, they have undermined it. Instead of the dignity you desire, you are more isolated." As he spoke, his South Korean hosts warned they might shoot down parts of a North Korean rocket if they fell over South Korean territory, as worries about what Washington calls a long-range missile test overshadowed an international nuclear security summit. The summit of more than 50 nations opened with a dinner Monday. In remarks earlier Monday at Seoul's Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Obama directly challenged North Korea's leaders "to have the courage to pursue peace." The threat posed by nearby nuclear-equipped North Korea also loomed large over Obama's meeting on the sidelines of the summit Monday with the president of China, Pyongyang's main ally. The White House said Obama urged Chinese President Hu Jintao to use his country's influence over North Korea to push the isolated country to meet its international obligations. Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security adviser, said Hu indicated that China was taking North Korea's planned rocket launch seriously and letting its concerns be known to the North's leaders. However, Rhodes was cautious about whether China's words would really lead to Beijing taking a tougher stand against North Korea. "China has expressed those concerns before and North Korea has continued on with its behavior," Rhodes said. "Therefore, China needs to look at whether it needs to be doing more above and beyond the types of messages and warnings it's been giving to the North Koreans." Obama himself said the same a day earlier, in an unusually direct criticism of China. The United States maintains that the launch, which Pyongyang says will happen next month, would amount to a test of North Korea's long-range rocketry. News of the planned launch dominated the diplomatic talk in Seoul, where world leaders are gathered to discuss steps to reduce the threat of nuclear material. In his remarks Monday, Obama declared flatly that the United States has more nuclear weapons than it needs and can cut its arsenal without weakening its security or that of its allies. He pledged to keep trying to rid the world of nuclear weapons despite disagreements with Russia over the next phase of a largely successful disarmament program he sees as a hallmark of his presidency. He also faces long if not impossible odds of winning Republican assent to new reductions in the US arsenal. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev noted as much, telling Obama at what will be their last

meeting that progress on hard political issues is difficult "in an election year." In unusually personal terms, Obama said he spoke of his wish for further nuclear reductions as the president of the only nation ever to use nuclear weapons, as a commander whose country's nuclear codes are never far from his side, and as a protective father eager to erase the threat of nuclear annihilation. Obama aimed his most stern remarks to North Korea's leaders, saying the internationally isolated country needs to change its ways because continuing down the same path will lead to "more broken dreams" and "more isolation." His blunt remarks came a day after he visited the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea and described the experience as akin to witnessing a "time warp" of despair. "Even as we have more work to do, we can already say with confidence that we have more nuclear weapons than we need," he said. "I firmly believe that we can ensure the security of the United States and our allies, maintain a strong deterrent against any threat, and still pursue further reductions in our nuclear arsenal." Obama also reiterated his warning to Iran, which the U.S. and its allies contend is defying its international obligations by pursuing an illicit nuclear program. "Iran's leaders must understand that there is no escaping the choice before it. Iran must act with the seriousness and sense of urgency that this moment demands," Obama said. "Iran must meet its obligations." Facing down Iran and North Korea, Obama said a "new international norm" was emerging to deal with the two nations' intransigence. "Treaties are binding. Rules will be enforced. And violations will have consequences," Obama said. "Because we refuse to consign ourselves to a future where more and more regimes possess the world's most deadly weapons." Obama said the U.S. was also moving forward with Russia to eliminate enough plutonium for about 17,000 nuclear weapons and turn it into electricity. And he heralded an earlier agreement with Russia to reduce nuclear arsenals under the New START Treaty, which Obama called "the most comprehensive arms control agreement in nearly two decades." "When we're done, we'll have cut American and Russian deployed nuclear warheads to their lowest levels since the 1950s," he said. Obama also prodded Russia in a new way, saying he would seek discussions with Moscow on an unprecedented front: reducing not only strategic nuclear warheads, but also tactical weapons and warheads in reserve. He said he planned to discuss that proposition with former leader Vladimir Putin, who will return to the presidency later this spring after winning an election held earlier this year, when they meet in May. After his meeting with Medvedev, Obama said the U.S. and Russia have "more work to do" to bridge their differences, including their approach to violence in Syria. The U.S. has sharply criticized Russia for opposing U.N. Security Council action calling on Syria's president to leave power. Despite their differences, Medvedev says the relationship between the U.S. and Russia has reached its "best level".

March 27, 2012

The South Carolina House has approved a bill barring contracted substitute teachers from receiving unemployment benefits during school breaks. The House voted 104-1 Tuesday for a bill clarifying that substitutes hired through a temporary agency are ineligible for jobless benefits. Labor Commerce and Industry Committee Chairman Bill Sandifer, of Seneca, said the issue has come up in a handful of school districts. He said the contracted substitutes sought to collect unemployment during summer and winter breaks. The bill requires another vote before heading to the Senate.

March 27, 2012

A second group wants participate in a legal challenge to South Carolina's voter identification law. The League of Women Voters on Monday asked a three-judge federal panel for permission to take part in the lawsuit. South Carolina has sued U.S. Attorney General, Eric Holder over the Department of Justice's rejection of the requirement that all voters have a form of government-issued photo identification. The Justice Department blocked the law in December, saying it could keep tens of thousands of the state's minorities from casting their ballots. Earlier this month, the judicial panel reviewing the case allowed the American Civil Liberties Union to play a role in the suit. Both the ACLU and the League of Women Voters want to enter the case on the side of the federal government.

March 30, 2012

George W. Bush is as hard to find in his father's office as he is in the 2012 presidential contest. The 43rd president appears in a gold-framed picture tucked into a far corner of the room, partially hidden by a Texas flag and a cabinet door. The placement, whether intentional or not, is a reminder of the Republican presidential campaign and the lengths to which Romney and his rivals have tried to marginalize the two-term president. The younger Bush was an afterthought Thursday as his father, former President George H.W. Bush, met with current GOP front-runner Mitt Romney - until a reporter raised the

issue. "I haven't met with President George W. Bush. We speak from time to time," Romney replied when asked if he had sought the younger Bush's endorsement. Reporters were forced out of the room before they could ask more questions about Romney's connection to the Republican president who left office three years ago with the nation on the brink of financial ruin. George W. Bush has been ignored for months in the Republican presidential campaign. But his absence has been more pronounced in recent days as Romney trumpeted endorsements from the former president's father and younger brother, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, as he spent two days courting donors in Texas. George W. Bush, who lives in Dallas, did not attend any of Romney's half dozen Texas fundraisers. He also isn't expected to follow his family's migration to Romney's camp any time soon. While largely unspoken, both sides acknowledge Republicans would be best served by not reminding voters of the Bush legacy of gaping budget deficits, two wars and record low approval ratings. His eight-year presidency has merited no more than a fleeting reference from Romney and his rivals in debates, campaign stops and interviews. "For now we're just staying out of it," George W. Bush spokesman Freddy Ford said Thursday, declining to comment on a possible endorsement. Ford said Bush was focused on promoting and developing his presidential library at Southern Methodist University. "That's really where he's spending his time." In 2010, Romney gave \$100,000 to the younger Bush's presidential library, according to tax records. Romney's campaign also has benefited from Bush's top talent, including strategists Stu Stevens and Russell Schrieffer, who worked on Bush's two presidential campaigns. Romney campaign manager Matt Rhoades was Bush's research director in 2004. George W. Bush's virtual absence from the presidential contest seemed to surprise even his 87-year-old father as reporters visited the senior Bush's private office in Houston to watch him endorse Romney. "Has he endorsed you?" George H.W. Bush quietly asked Romney as reporters started to leave the room. "Uh, no, no," Romney replied before former first lady Barbara Bush cut in. "We'll talk about that," she said. The 43rd president has kept his distance from national politics since leaving office in 2009 with a Gallup approval rating of just 34 percent. His predecessor, Democrat Bill Clinton, had a 66 percent approval rating in early 2001 when he stepped down after two terms marred by a sex scandal and impeachment. A plurality of Americans continue to blame Bush for the nation's economic struggles: 43 percent of voters said he deserved a lot or almost all of the blame, compared with 36 percent who point to Republicans in Congress, 33 percent who think Democrats in Congress are responsible and 30 percent who credit President Barack Obama, according to a December Associated Press-GfK poll. In a presidential contest dominated by concerns over the economy, government spending and federal debt, the Republican candidates have been loath to acknowledge the extent to which George W. Bush's policies contributed to those problems. There is no question that Obama's policies, including the federal stimulus program and the auto industry bailout, have swollen the deficit and deepened the debt. And three years into his presidency, Obama often falls back on complaints about the bad situation he inherited when defending his own economic performance. But while Obama may be overly eager to blame the Bush years for the nation's problems, GOP presidential contenders seem just as eager to pretend those years never happened. "George W. Bush is still too fresh in the minds of voters," said Republican operative Michael Dennehy, a top staffer for Sen. John McCain's 2008 presidential bid. "The Democrats' strategy is to try to pin the bad economy on him. ... It's smarter to just avoid being directly drawn into that line of attack right now." Taking office in 2001 with a balanced federal budget and a surplus in the Treasury, Bush quickly pushed through sweeping tax cuts without nipping expenditures a corresponding amount. The tax cuts were to expire after 10 years, but Obama allowed them to remain temporarily in exchange for an extension of unemployment benefits and a payroll tax cut. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan launched after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks never were budgeted and have cost taxpayers more than \$1.4 trillion. Obama ordered the last troops out of Iraq in December, but the Afghanistan conflict is set to continue through 2014. Bush also signed legislation in 2003 enacting a prescription drug benefit as part of Medicare, the government health care plan for seniors. The benefit is projected to cost as much as \$1.2 trillion over 10 years. Another Bush-era package was the Troubled Asset Relief Program, the \$700 billion bailout for the financial industry authorized by Congress in the fall of 2008 and loathed by many conservatives. Romney supported the bailout, as did then-presidential candidates Obama and McCain.

Attachments



Jobs, Economy, Growth

**ADDRESSING PROBLEM/NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **JOBS/ECONOMY/GROWTH**

DATE

TIME

PROGRAM

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

US Coast Guard

SC National Guard

January 27, 2012

The U.S. economy grew at a 2.8 percent annual rate in the final three months of last year, the fastest growth in 2011. Americans spent more on [cars](#) and trucks, and companies restocked their shelves at the strongest pace in nearly two years. But growth in the October-December quarter - and all of last year - was held back by the biggest annual government spending cuts in four decades. The Commerce Department said Friday that the economy grew just 1.7 percent last year, roughly half of the growth in 2010 and the worst since the recession. Most economists expect businesses to ease up on restocking in the first three months of the year. That should slow first-quarter growth. And consumers may cut back on spending if their wages continue to lag inflation. In the final three months of last year, consumer spending grew at a 2 percent annual rate. That's up modestly from the third quarter. Much of the growth was powered by a 14.8 percent surge in sales of autos and other long-lasting manufactured goods. Incomes, which have been weak all year because of high unemployment, grew at a modest 0.8 percent annual rate. That followed two straight quarters of declining incomes. Consumer spending is important because it makes up 70 percent of economic activity. Business restocking, which can vary widely from quarter to quarter, was the greatest contributor to growth in the October-December period. It added nearly 2 percentage points to the gross domestic product, or GDP. Government spending at all levels fell at an annual rate of 4.6 percent in the fourth quarter and 2.1 percent for the year - the biggest decline since 1971. Sweeping federal defense cuts at the beginning and end of 2011 were a major factor. The economy is measured GDP, which covers everything from haircuts to hotel bookings to jet fighter planes. Friday's estimate was the first of three for the fourth quarter. Paul Ashworth, an economist at Capital Economics, said growth is likely to slow in the first three months of this year to below 2 percent. That's largely because business restocking will slow. "Overall, the pickup in growth doesn't look half as good when you realize that most of it was due to inventory accumulation," Ashworth said. But not all economists agree that the first quarter of this year will be weak. Ian Shepherdson, an economist at High Frequency Economics, said business investment in capital goods should be stronger, consumer spending firmer and government activity less of a drag. Other data show the economy ended 2011 on a strong note. Companies invested more in equipment and machinery in December. The unemployment rate fell to 8.5 percent last month - the lowest level in nearly three years - after the sixth straight month of solid hiring. People are buying more cars, and consumer confidence is rising. Even the depressed housing market has shown enough improvement to make some economists predict a turnaround has begun. Still, many economists worry that a recession in Europe could dampen demand for U.S. manufactured goods, which would slow growth. And without more jobs and better pay, consumer spending is likely to stagnate. The Federal Reserve signaled this week that a full recovery could take at least three more years. In response, it said it would probably not increase its benchmark interest rate until late 2014 at the earliest - a year and a half later than it had previously said. The central bank also slightly reduced its outlook for growth this year, from as much as 2.9 percent forecast in November down to 2.7 percent. The Fed sees unemployment falling as low as 8.2 percent this year.

January 31, 2012

Laurens County will get its first China-based company when a plastic film maker opens its doors in 2014. The announcement was made Tuesday that Uniscite Inc. plans to develop operations in the county, investing \$70 million and generating up to 100 new jobs. Uniscite will build a new Greenfield plant to produce the company's plastic film, such as those used in packaging for food products, using up-to-date machinery to make the BOPP film at exceptional speed. The company currently has an office in Greenville and expects the plant completion in the first quarter of 2014. "Laurens County offered us an excellent business environment and ready and available workforce," said Fang Wang, general manager of Uniscite Inc. "We appreciate all the support we've received from state and local officials, and we plan to create as many job opportunities as possible for the state." The Department of Commerce said the Coordinating Council for Economic Development approved a set aside grant for \$400,000 and job development credits, which will be available when hiring targets are met. Ready SC will provide pre-employment training. The company will begin hiring by early 2013 and said they will seek candidates who have experience or education in process, electrical and mechanical engineering as well as technical operations. Interested candidates were asked to email Toni Puleo at tonipuleo@unisciteinc.com.

February 7, 2012

A measure suspending the unemployment benefits of anyone who fails a drug test as part of a job application is heading to the House floor. State law already disqualifies workers fired for drug use from collecting unemployment benefits. The bill advanced Tuesday by the House Judiciary Committee addresses those already receiving benefits. They would be suspended if a job seeker tests positive for illegal drugs while applying for a new job, and the employer reports the failure to the state. Rep. Todd Rutherford, of Columbia, said the bill is a job discourager by adding another level of bureaucracy to employment. A Senate bill would require all jobless workers to pass a drug test to collect their benefits; however, the U.S. Labor Department said that would conflict with federal law.

February 10, 2012

Gov. Nikki Haley is announcing a partnership with a company that does college admission tests to match unemployed workers with the businesses who need them. Haley told The Associated Press on Thursday that South Carolina is among four states where ACT is launching its Certified Work Ready Communities academy. The Republican governor planned to publicly announce the details at a news conference at Midlands Technical College later Thursday. The state's unemployment agency already uses ACT's work readiness system for tests, training and certification. Haley says the new effort will integrate South Carolina's various training programs and create a business plan for workforce training. South Carolina's unemployment rate was 9.5 percent in December.

March 8, 2012

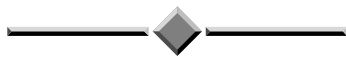
The *Greer Citizen* reported Wednesday that Wal-Mart will open its first "Neighborhood Market" in South Carolina in a Greer strip mall. The new store will be built in the old Winn-Dixie location in the Greer Plaza on Wade Hampton Blvd., according to the newspaper. Wal-Mart's new store will combine the bulk-buying power the chain is known for with a setting that's more accessible than the company's traditional super stores. It will be one-fourth the size of a typical Wal-Mart, the newspaper reported. There are 165 Neighborhood Markets across the country, carrying a full line of groceries and other items. Construction may begin within the next two months. Wal-Mart will hire 90 people about six months before the new store will open, all according to the newspaper. The *Greer Citizen* is a coverage partner of FOX Carolina.

March 13, 2012

While the unemployment numbers for January dropped in the Carolinas, the reports show that the rates are still higher than the national jobless rate. South Carolina's jobless rate has fallen for the sixth straight month, but state officials say the drop is mostly because thousands of people stopped looking for work. The state Department of Employment and Workforce said Tuesday that South Carolina's unemployment rate was 9.3 percent in January. That's still a full percentage point higher than the national jobless rate of 8.3 percent. The agency says the state drop is mostly because about 7,900 people stopped looking for jobs. In December, the state's unemployment rate plunged to its lowest rate in three years as an improving economy had employers putting more people to work making, moving and selling goods. The revised 9.6 percent rate was down from 9.9 percent in November. The latest report on North Carolina's unemployment rate paints a darker picture of the

state's economy. The state Commerce Department reported Tuesday that the unemployment rate in January was 10.2 percent, much higher than the national average of 8.3 percent. The announcement is the first release of North Carolina jobless data in nearly two months. There was no report last month as calculations that went into last year's figures were re-examined. The result is that earlier estimates of North Carolina's unemployment rate dropping below 10 percent in December are being revised. The new estimates are that the state's unemployment rate was 10.4 percent in November and December before falling to 10.2 percent in January. The state unemployment rate in January 2011 was 10.5 percent.

Attachments



Quality of Life

**ADDRESSING PROBLEM/NEED
FIRST QUARTER 2012**

Problem/Need: **QUALITY OF LIFE**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
Saturdays	12:30am	WESTGATE FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH
<u>Description:</u> A church service that airs Saturdays at 12:30am. (30:00)		
Sundays	6:00am	MOUNT MORIAH BAPTIST CHURCH
<u>Description:</u> A church service airing Sunday mornings. (1-hour)		
Sundays,	7:30am	GREG LENTZ MINISTRIES
<u>Description:</u> A church service that airs every Sunday morning. (30:00)		
Sundays	8:30am	MUD CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH
<u>Description:</u> A church service that airs every Sunday morning. (30:00)		
Sundays	9:30 am	TAYLORS FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
<u>Description:</u> A church service that airs every Sunday morning. (30:00)		
Sundays	10:30am	FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
<u>Description:</u> A church service that airs every Sunday morning and Saturday night. (30:00)		

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AIRED:

Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Make A Wish, United Way
Adoption, Pet Adoption

January 10, 2012

Sue Sanders said she hoped she's painted a good picture of her life. "I have a good bit of drawings and paintings that I've done," she said. Some of her experiences are evident in her artwork which hang on her wall at Skylyn Place in Spartanburg. But she's also proud of another milestone. On Monday, she celebrated her 110th birthday and said there's really no secret to her longevity. "I'm always very particular about eating the right things and doing the right things," Sanders said as she laughed. She was born in Athens, GA, on Jan. 9, 1902 and said she remembers when horses and buggies, or stagecoaches as she calls them, filled the streets. "My parents had a delivery stable and they had pretty horses and carriages and we'd go places," she said. She moved to McCormick, SC, where she married, had two children and taught in the school district. Her son, Harvey Sanders Jr., who is 75-years-old, said it's hard to describe his mother with just a few words. "It means that I got good genes to start with. Secondly, she's just a wonderful, wonderful person," he said. And a crowd of people at Skylyn Place think so too and celebrated with a party in her honor. She received proclamations from lawmakers and lots of hugs and kisses. Sue Sanders is a mother, grandmother; friend, teacher and artist who hopes to create more picture perfect moments.

January 31, 2012

An annual balloon festival in the Upstate will play host to two championships this year, it was announced Tuesday. Freedom Weekend Aloft was selected to host the Southeast Regional Championship of the Balloon Federation of America. It will also host the South Carolina State Championships. Both events are qualifying races where pilots can compete for bids to the U.S. Nationals and World Championships. The annual event will be held at Heritage Park in Simpsonville and lifts off during Memorial Day weekend - May 25-28.

February 7, 2012

South Carolina drivers can buy religious license plates that feature three crosses and a sunrise, 2.5 years after a federal judge declared a previous legislative effort for the "I Believe" tags unconstitutional. The new tags are sponsored by the nonprofit group www.IBELIEVEsc.net as allowed under state law. A federal judge ruled in 2009 that "I Believe" tags legislators created by state law violated the First Amendment ban on establishment of religion by government. That plate featured a cross and stained glass window. Nonprofit spokeswoman Adrian Grimes says the new tag is a nonpolitical way for Christians of all denominations to share their faith. Americans United for Separation of Church and State sued over the 2008 law. A spokesman says the group sees no constitutional problem with these plates.

February 7, 2012

There is a new approach to adding more branches to your family tree. It is called genetic genealogy. The idea is that a company collects DNA and matches genetic profiles with people who lived many generations ago. The research is available to people around the world. Genetree has developed a database of 112,000 people in more than 170 countries. Those who agree to sign up for the service are able to log on to a website and make connections with people who share genetic information. Those who sign up for the service, pay a fee of more than \$100 to take part. They agree to send a sample of mouthwash to the company, where the DNA information is analyzed and added to the database. It is then compared to other participants and the information is made available to those who have taken part. The president of Genetree told FOX Carolina, the system improves as more people agree to add their DNA. Efforts have been made to visit people on every continent, to collect samples and add those to the database as well. FOX Carolina's Diana Watson agreed to send her DNA to the company. It was analyzed and she was given information about her paternal and maternal family lines. She was given more detailed information about her father's side of the family. She knew they were from Poland, but was able to get other family names that include DNA similarities. She also found out more about her mother's side of the family, who live mainly in Marion County, South Carolina. Genetree led her to other states and as far away as England, where it is believed her ancestors originated.

February 9, 2012

Whether you're celebrating love with that special someone or condemning it with your best friend, there's one thing that can improve any Valentine's Day: the perfect dessert in your stomach. "The best way to let the people in your life know you care about them this Valentine's is with something sweet," says Meghan McGarry, expert pastry chef and praised Buttercream

Blondie blogger. To celebrate love's big day, McGarry has given three classic desserts makeovers, each inspired by a different level in relationships. Poll "I love pink things and hearts - two Valentine's Day staples - and so it's an excuse for me to be more over-the-top than usual," the Boston-based chef says of her always exciting new takes on classic desserts. As her reputation has proven, if you follow McGarry's guaranteed-to-wow recipes this Valentine's Day, your desserts won't just sparkle (literally), they'll also have you counting down the days until the next February 14. The Beginning "When you first like someone, you feel wonky, distracted, all out of sorts," McGarry says, calling to mind her first crush as she grew up in the Bronx. "You think, 'When is he going to call?'" That feeling of infatuation we all remember too well is what inspired McGarry's first and most basic Valentine's Day dessert - the "Love Monster" cupcake. "This is a fun way to say, 'I like you,'" McGarry says. "It's a dessert that's delicious but not all that serious." The treats, which represent the little monsters inside us all, are an exercise in decorating. A basic cupcake is transformed into a monster before your eyes, as you pipe dyed buttercream frosting on top of traditional cupcakes, then give them a jolt of personality with candied mouths and heart-shaped eyes enhanced with eye-popping disco dust. "Once you start adding the decorations is when these cupcakes begin to take on a life of their own," McGarry says. "This is a dessert that really gets to show off your creative side." No one way is right when making these tasty confections, McGarry says, so don't worry about your baking skill when choosing this recipe. While McGarry forms her monster's eyes with fondant and toothpicks, for example, you can easily substitute lollipops. For this reason, McGarry points out that her cupcakes are a great project for kids, too. "A little bit of imagination and disco dust go a long way," the pastry chef says. Taking it to the next level "The second dessert is not only more serious, it's more decadent, too. It's something sweet you can share with that special someone," McGarry says. "At this point in the relationship, you're definitely exclusive." McGarry's red velvet cake makeover is designed for Level II relationships, those that aren't new but rather more personal and more established. "Red velvet cake frites is my way to zhush up a classic and take it to the next level," McGarry says. "If you're looking to take your relationship to the next level, this might be just the dessert for you." For McGarry, the deep-fryer is not an everyday appliance. Rather, it's reserved for special moments, like Valentine's Day. To make her frites, McGarry first bakes a traditional red velvet cake in a loaf pan, freezes it and slicing it up into pieces, which are then dipped in funnel cake batter and cooked to golden perfection. The success of the dessert lies in its ability to remain light and fluffy in spite of being fried, McGarry says. "It's like adding a soft, little pillow around the red velvet cake," she says. "It's so incredibly light." In order to take the frites to that next level of love, McGarry chose to pair them with a dark chocolate Southern Comfort sauce. "It cuts the sweetness and gives you a nice little pop of flavor," the pastry chef explains. This is the perfect dessert to share with your sweetie. If you're single, don't fret. Just keep them all to yourself, or serve them to your friends if you're hosting a girl's night out. Some things are just meant to be. The final dessert McGarry envisioned for Valentine's Day was recently released on the first anniversary of her immensely successful Buttercream Blondie blog. The same amount of love that goes into McGarry's blog went into this dessert: a vanilla bean blondie cheesecake. McGarry's alter-ego Buttercream Blondie is, of course, inspired by her colorful, chocolate blondies, which have a reputation as Boston's finest. McGarry reinvented her own signature dish by hooking it up with her oft-requested vanilla bean cheesecake. The result is a flavor that's instantly timeless. "These two things were destined to be together, just like some people are destined to be together," the pastry chef says. To show that someone special that you really care about them, McGarry recommends baking the cheesecakes in heart-shaped springform pans and topping them with a heart-shaped mound of rainbow sprinkles. To make his and hers versions, you can also die half of your cheesecake batter pink. "The flavors hit your mouth, and you think, 'This was meant to be,'" McGarry says. While Valentine's Day may come and go, dessert doesn't. In the coming weeks, McGarry will unveil new treats on her blog, including giant peanut butter cookies. "You don't need a special occasion like Valentine's day to make desserts shine," McGarry says. "I'm glittering and glamming up your favorites every week online."

February 10, 2012

Greer got a new police chief on Thursday - at least for the day. Just before noon, 5-year-old Jaden Jones was sworn in as the city's top cop by Mayor Rick Danner. Jaden, who suffers from a lung disease, got his big opportunity during an auction last year by Greer Community Ministries, when his parents bought a chief-for-a-day certificate. His parents said Jaden has always dreamed about being a police officer. "Just seeing his face, today, light up like it did," said Raymond Jones, Jaden's father. "It brings tears to my eyes." After taking the oath, Jaden spent the day riding along with officers and getting a special, behind-the-scenes look at what it is like to be in charge of a police department. He was also treated to a pizza lunch in downtown Greer. Jaden's parents said that after their son was born, doctors said he would not live past six months old.

February 17, 2012

An Anderson man said he plans to pay off all of his debt with his \$200,000 in lottery winnings. The unidentified man bought the \$10 Winner Green ticket at the MD Food Mart on Williamston Road in Anderson. "I'm happy," the winner told the South Carolina Education Lottery. "I'm out of debt." The store that sold the winning ticket will receive a \$2,000 commission. A \$1 million Mega Millions ticket was sold at the same store in June.

March 8, 2012

Obesity and related chronic health issues cost taxpayers billions of dollars a year, with nearly \$2 billion spent in 2011 alone in the 10 metro areas with the highest obesity rates, according to research from Gallup. The metropolitan area with the highest obesity rate is McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX. Nearly 40 percent of residents are deemed obese, costing an estimated \$411 million a year. Boulder, CO, took the title for the lowest obesity rate, with only 12 percent of residents suffering from the condition. In all, Americans paid around \$80 billion for additional health care costs related to obesity in 2011. And all that extra weight isn't just hitting them in the pocketbook or in the store's dressing room. The numbers show people in the most obese areas were 71 percent more likely to report that they suffered from diabetes than those in the least obese areas. Similar patterns were seen for reports of heart attacks, high blood pressure, depression and high cholesterol. So where do the numbers show people need to shape up? Texas is home to two of the 10 most obese metro areas: McAllen and Beaumont-Port Arthur. Other cities on the list include Binghamton, NY; Huntington, WV; Rockford, IL; Charleston, WV; Lakeland, FL; Topeka, KS; Kennewick, WA; and Reading, PA. As for the least obese places? Maybe it's the overabundance of outdoor activities, but Colorado laid claim to three of the 10 least obese metro areas: Boulder, Fort Collins, and Colorado Springs. Other fit metropolitan areas include Norwalk, CT; Barnstable Town, Ma; Santa Barbara, CA; Naples, FL; Trenton, NJ; Provo, UT; and San Francisco, CA. The rankings were based on self-reported height and weight numbers, which were used to calculate an individual's Body Mass Index (BMI) scores. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one-third of adults in America are obese, while 17 percent of people between ages 2 and 19 suffer from the condition. "Eating should be pleasurable, but it is important to be aware of how much food we eat each day," said Marjorie Nola, a registered dietitian and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. "A key step to maintaining a healthy lifestyle is putting less food on your plate." The Academy suggests that Americans stay mindful of daily calorie needs, avoid oversized portions by using smaller plates, cook at home, watch for liquid calories in sodas and similar drinks and keep a food log to avoid obesity. An active lifestyle is also key. "Choose activities you enjoy like going for a walk with your family, joining a sports team, dancing or playing with your children," said Andrea Giancoli, a registered dietitian and spokesperson for the Academy. "If you don't have a full 30 minutes, carve out 10 minutes three times a day. Every bit adds up and health benefits increase the more active you are." March is National Nutrition Month.

March 26, 2012

Hundreds of people packed an Upstate park to show their support for the family of Trayvon Martin. Their message, in chants said throughout the rally was, "no justice, no peace." The rally, which happened in Greenville's Cleveland Park on Saturday afternoon, was attended by people of every age and every race, all expressing outrage. "Greenville, we come together when there is an injustice," said State House Rep. Chandra Dillard. "We come together to stand by and beside each other. That injustice in Florida is an injustice here to us." The organizers say the message they have is simple - it could happen here, it could happen anywhere, and it could happen to anyone. "My 17-year-old son walks to the store all the time," said organizer Traci Fant. "He buys Skittles, Arizona (Tea) is his favorite drink. It could've been my child, dammit." People showed their support with signs, with hoodies, with the items Martin was carrying with him when he was shot and killed last month in Florida. "Our children, in their eyes, have less rights than a stray animal," says Fant. "We cannot let this continue to happen to our children." The people want justice for Trayvon Martin. Some at the rally were already comparing his death to the 1955 death of Emmett Till, a teenager who was killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman. Others say the time has come to move on from targeting someone because of their race. Travis Watson attended Saturday's rally, and said, "As a young black male, I look like Trayvon Martin." Tina O'Connor brought her son to the event and said, "Somebody needs to stand up and say 'We're all in this together, we're all human beings.'" For those attending the rally, there's a hope that justice will come, but also a hope that future generations will understand what happened. "It's a people thing, it's a human thing," says O'Connor. "That's what I'm taking away from it, that's what I'm wanting him to take away from it, too," pointing to her teenage son. Organizers say they were initially expecting less than 100 people to show up to Saturday's rally, but nearly 10 times that amount attended. The organizers say they're overwhelmed, but thankful for all the support.

March 26, 2012

A North Carolina couple is showing off the 50-carat emerald they dug from a vein of the precious gemstone running through Alexander County. Kevin and Libby Barrieault say they uncovered the stone Friday, a week after the state natural sciences museum showed off its gift of 3 uncut emeralds and the largest cut emerald in North America. All were found near the town of Hiddenite. The Barrieaults and other gemstone enthusiast went digging Friday at the North American Emerald Mine in Hiddenite. Mine owner Jamie Hill says it's the first time in 40 years that a gemstone club has been allowed to dig on the land. Hill estimates the Barrieault's find could net them \$10,000, allowing them to keep the stone since the mine keeps finds worth more than that.

March 30, 2012

With Easter around the corner, delicious seasonal treats like Cadbury Mini Eggs and Peeps are lining store shelves. Recipe: Cadbury Mini Egg Cheesecake Bars BOSTON (RNN) - If you're searching for something light and cooling on a warm Easter day, look no further than Buttercream Blondie. For her celebrated blog, pastry chef Meghan McGarry has conjured up an entire series of Easter treats, including these tantalizing cheesecake bars. The following recipe yields between nine and 12 portions. Cadbury Mini Egg Cookie Crust 4 ounces unsalted butter, room temperature 1/4 cup sugar 3/4 cup light brown sugar 1 egg 2 teaspoons vanilla extract 1 cup + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour 1/2 teaspoon baking powder 1/2 teaspoon baking soda 1/2 teaspoon salt 8 ounces Cadbury Mini Eggs Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Cream butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla extract to same bowl. Add flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt, and mix to combine Mix in Cadbury Mini Eggs. (If you use a stand mixer, the mixer will break up most of the eggs for you. If you use a hand mixer, you might have to break them up before adding them.) Line an 8-inch square pan with parchment paper and spray with non-stick spray. Spread cookie dough evenly in pan and bake at 325 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes. The recipe for the cheesecake filling can be found on Buttercream Blondie. Additional Recipes: Glamour Peeps 2.0 Copyright 2012 Raycom News Network. Recipe reprinted with permission from Meghan McGarry. The perennial favorites serve as the inspiration for exciting new desserts at Buttercream Blondie, the blog managed by expert pastry chef Meghan McGarry. "The weather is warming up outside and iced coffee is brewing," McGarry says. "Now it's time to bring the colors of spring into your kitchen." In advance of next Sunday's holiday, McGarry has released two recipes, which are the epitome of her mantra: flirt with desserts. The pastry chef has taken two traditional spring desserts - cheesecake and marshmallows - and reinvented them with glamorous makeovers. The results are sure to impress house guests who are making their first exodus into the warm air and to bring a little color - literally - to everyday life. Cheesecake made simple McGarry's first Easter dessert is inspired by her favorite seasonal candy: Cadbury Mini Eggs. "Cadbury Mini Eggs are just synonymous with Easter," McGarry says of her inspiration. "They come in pretty pastel colors, which make you smile. My favorite is the pink." Instead of taking the easy way out with a cookie, the pastry chef decided to add the candy to a cheesecake. Since the weather is heating up, McGarry chose a less-involved route to make the dessert, trading in her springform pan for a square baking pan in order to maximize her time outside of her Boston-area home. Crushed-up Cadbury Mini Eggs fill both the cookie crust and cheesecake of her dessert. The candy is the centerpiece, and it never overwhelms. "It's a cookie and a cheesecake, so the little portion of a bar is just enough," McGarry explains. The pastry chef says the bars are perfect for any Easter party, because you don't have to go through the messy process of slicing and plating a cake. "All you have to do is pop them out and put them on a platter," McGarry says. "The cleanup is easy." McGarry recommends giving the cheesecake bars a little extra flair with some food coloring. "I tinted some of the cheesecake batter pink and swirled it on top of the bars, so it would appear extra springy," she said. These aren't your store-bought Peeps Last year, McGarry created her most beloved makeover of all time: Glamour Peeps. "When I was a child, my mom put a white chocolate bunny in my Easter basket, but I couldn't eat it, because it was so cute," McGarry says. "But I never had a problem eating Peeps. As an adult and chef, I felt like they could be even better than I remembered if I made them on my own." This year, McGarry's taking her handmade peeps to a whole new level thanks to a little help from food coloring and disco dust. "You can add food coloring to them to make them your favorite color," she said. "Obviously some of mine are always pink." McGarry finished her new and improved Glamour Peeps 2.0 with shiny disco dust, a non-toxic product she buys at pastry supply stores for cake decorating. Sanding sugar can be used as an alternative. "Once the marshmallows settle overnight, I brush them with a very small amount of water on them, and I brush on some disco dust," she says. "I use disco dust, because it's an extension of my personality. I like to make things sparkle." The peeps are formed with homemade marshmallows and a piping bag. The process is easily explained by the instructional video on McGarry's blog. In front of the camera, you can see the pastry chef's inspirations really come to life. "People may think it's a

scary thing to do, but it's not," McGarry says. "It's just one of those things you have to let go and try." A look ahead McGarry has tipped the Raycom News Network off to an exciting new Easter cupcake makeover, which will be unveiled next week on Buttercream Blondie. "There's always something more for me to try," she says of her recipe. "I always have to stretch my limits." In the coming weeks, McGarry's blog, which recently celebrated its one-year anniversary, will be going through a little makeover of its own. "Be on the lookout for my redesign," McGarry said. "The new, user-friendly site will make you even more inspired to get in the kitchen and start baking."

March 30, 2012

No one won the Mega Millions jackpot Tuesday night, so the drawing on Friday was set at \$500 million on Wednesday then raised again to \$540 million on Thursday before being raised again to \$640 million, the largest lottery jackpot in world history. What are the odds? Sure, it's nice to think about winning a half-billion dollars, but the odds are not in your favor -- 1 in 175,711,536. You have better odds of: Being struck by lightning in your lifetime (1 in 10,000) Bowling a perfect game (1 in 11,500) Hitting a hole in one (1 in 12,000) Having twins (1 in 40) Becoming President of the United States (1 in 43 million) Being injured by hail (1 in 5,114,000) Sources: NWS, Yahoo! Answers, Twinstuff.com, Answers.com and Bookofodds.com South Carolina Education Lottery officials said the previous jackpot of \$363 million rolled over Tuesday. With the jackpot worth \$640 million, winners could choose to take home a one-time cash payment of \$462 million. Even earlier Wednesday, the jackpot was set at \$476 million, but officials increased the potential winnings again. "Unbelievable," said Executive Director Paula Harper Bethea, of the South Carolina Education Lottery. "It's hard to fathom a number like \$476 million. Just think, someone, somewhere, is going to win at least that much. I'm hoping South Carolina will be the state to stop this jackpot run." If a player in South Carolina wins, he or she would be the first in the state's history to win the Mega Millions jackpot. The odds of winning are the jackpot are long, about 1 in 175.7 million. Mega Millions tickets cost \$1 and are available at lottery retailers statewide. Someone in York County did win \$250,000 Tuesday night in the drawing. This jackpot has been growing since January 24, when Mega Millions had its most recent jackpot winner. The jackpot has now rolled 18 times without a winner. Mega Millions is played in more than 40 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Lottery officials urge players to play responsibly and safeguard their prize by signing the back of their tickets. Tune into FOX Carolina Friday night after The Ten O'Clock News for the jackpot drawing at 11 p.m. Tickets must be bought by 10 p.m.